

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF ALL COLORADANS

COLORADO: WHERE QUALITY OF LIFE IS A CORE VALUE

In Colorado, people pride themselves on the fact that they live in a state where high quality of life is a core value. Colorado laws play an important role in ensuring that all people have an equal opportunity to enjoy the wonderful advantages our state has to offer.

Prior to 2007, it was legal in most of Colorado to discriminate against gay and transgender people simply for being who they are. Today, laws exist to protect them from discrimination in their place of employment, public accommodations, and housing.

These laws strive for equal treatment for all Coloradans, regardless of sexual orientation or gender expression. They help our state become a better place that offers a high quality of life while allowing us to realize our highest values as citizens.

KNOW THE LAW

Coloradans must be aware of their rights and the rights of others. By becoming aware of laws that exist to ensure equal opportunity, we can help our fellow Coloradans—our co-workers, friends, family members, neighbors, and clients—when they experience the pain of discrimination.

It's not just the right thing to do, it's the law.

COLORADO ANTI-DISCRIMINATION TASK FORCE

Agency for Human Rights and Community Relations,
Denver Anti-Discrimination Office

The Center's Legal Initiatives Project

Colorado Civil Rights Division

Denver GLBT Commission

Equal Rights Colorado

Gay & Lesbian Fund for Colorado

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender
Community Center of Colorado

Our Mission

To increase education and awareness regarding implementation of Colorado's anti-discrimination laws among businesses, the Colorado public, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals.

For more information visit:

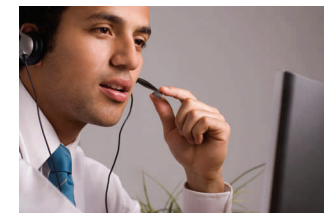
www.ColoradoProtectsAll.info

(303) 733-7743

Colorado
Anti-Discrimination
Task Force
2009

CREATING A DISCRIMINATION-FREE COLORADO

**Gay & transgender people:
An equal right to enjoy our state**



COLORADO
ANTI-
DISCRIMINATION
TASK FORCE

COLORADO LAWS NOW PROTECT ALL PEOPLE FROM DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, AND HOUSING. COLORADO IS WORKING HARD TO KEEP ITS REPUTATION AS A PLACE WHERE WE CAN ALL ENJOY A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE.

PROTECTING COLORADANS

EMPLOYMENT: In May 2007, Governor Bill Ritter signed the Employment Nondiscrimination Act, which expands Colorado's employment nondiscrimination protections to include sexual orientation, defined as heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, transgender status, or perception thereof. It makes it illegal to consider these things when making employment-related decisions or to make any inquiries about an applicant's sexual orientation, inclusive of transgender status. The law applies to employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, on-the-job training, and vocational training programs and schools. **What it means for Coloradans:** A discrimination-free workplace ensures a healthy environment that attracts and retains the best employees, enabling Colorado businesses to maintain a competitive edge and keep Colorado on the *list of the country's top 5 states for business. *CNBC.com, 2008.

PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS: In May 2008, Governor Ritter signed the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act into law, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or transgender status in public accommodations. Covered entities may not deny a gay or transgender person participation, entry, or services. A place of public accommodation is any place of business that offers sales or services of any kind to the public, or that offers facilities, privileges, advantages or other accommodations to the public, such as hotels, restaurants, stores, hospitals, clinics, and health clubs. **What it means for Coloradans:** All people are assured equal access to public accommodations, such as restaurants and hotels, free of discrimination.

HOUSING: In May 2008, Governor Ritter signed the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act into law, prohibiting unfair housing practices on the basis of sexual orientation or transgender status. It applies to landlords, lessors, sellers, homeowner associations, lenders, real estate agencies, insurers, advertisers, cities, counties, government agencies, and others involved in showing, selling, renting, transferring, or leasing housing or residential real estate. **What it means for Coloradans:** All people are assured equal access to housing free of discrimination.

DOES DISCRIMINATION HAPPEN HERE?

Most individuals and businesses don't discriminate against other people due to their sexual orientation or transgender status. However, discrimination does still occur from time to time. Colorado's laws exist to protect those who do experience unequal treatment.

A FRESH FACE ON EXISTING LAWS

Anti-discrimination laws are not a novelty in Colorado—many counties and cities throughout the state have had anti-discrimination policies in place for years. Expanding protections based on sexual orientation and transgender status improves laws that have existed in Colorado since the 1950s.

The vast majority of people in this country live in jurisdictions where the law already protects gay and/or transgender people: 19 other states and the District of Columbia have already updated their nondiscrimination protections to include sexual orientation, and 12 of these states also include gender identity or expression. Coloradans can be proud that our state is among them.

Most Coloradans believe discrimination is wrong and should be against the law.

- According to a Gallup Poll, 9 out of 10 Americans support equal opportunity for gays and lesbians. (Source: Gallup, 2003)
- A survey of 900 Coloradans found that 76% support workplace protections for gay and lesbian people. (Source: Ciruli & Associates, 2002 survey)
- Most Americans, 61 percent, also believe that the law should protect transgender people in the workplace. (Source: Lake & Associates, 2002 poll)

COLORADO VOICES

"We must speak out for *all* people, because if the rights of any are sacrificed, the rights of none are safe." - **Bruce DeBoskey, Anti-Defamation League**

"Ensuring equal treatment of all employees is fundamental to creating a fair and mutually respectful work environment."- **Carmen Rhodes, Front Range Economic Strategy Center**

"We have a collective responsibility to protect, defend and extend the civil rights and liberties of all individuals in Colorado, regardless of sexual orientation or transgender status." - **Cathryn Hazouri, American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado**

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS

Filing a claim

Individuals who have experienced discrimination and would like to file a complaint should contact:

Colorado Civil Rights Division
303-894-2997

www.dora.state.co.us/civil-rights/complaint_process.htm

Note that charges of discrimination must be filed within a certain time period of the last date of the alleged discriminatory action:

- Employment: must be filed *within 6 months*
- Accommodations: must be filed *within 60 days*
- Housing: must be filed *within 1 year*

Additional resources

The Center's Legal Initiatives Project
www.glbtcolorado.org

Denver Anti-Discrimination Office
www.denvergov.org/discrimination

Lambda Legal
www.lambdalegal.org

National Center for Lesbian Rights
www.nclrights.org