

Revisiting the Parental Rights of Same-Sex Parents in Maryland Following the Downfall of DOMA

The past year has seen significant advancement and reasons for celebration in the fight for legal equality in the gay and lesbian communities.

On November 6, 2012, Maryland voters passed referendums legalizing same-sex marriage, which took effect on January 1, 2013, making Maryland one of 14 states and the District of Columbia to allow same-sex couples to legally marry. That local victory was soon followed by an even more significant national achievement. On June 26 of this year, in *US v. Windsor*, the Supreme Court struck down the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which denied government benefits to same-sex spouses and prohibited the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriages in states that legally recognized their union. As a result of the DOMA decision, same-sex couples are now entitled to receive equal treatment under the laws of the federal government and access to more than 1,000 federal protections, previously granted only to heterosexual spouses. Even with the Supreme Court's recent ruling, the quest for equality under the eyes of the law remains a work in progress, since there are still certain liberties not automatically granted to same-sex married couples, particularly those planning to have children and raise a family.

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