

Love. Commitment. Marriage.

Marriage is one of the few times where people reveal their hearts, make a public promise of love and responsibility for each other and ask our friends and family to hold us accountable.

That's why gay and lesbian couples want to join in civil marriage – to make a lifetime commitment to the person they love.



Committed couples, whether they are gay or straight, hope to marry for similar reasons – to make a lifetime promise to share the joys and sorrows that life brings.

- Gay and lesbian couples may seem different from straight couples, but we share similar values, like the importance of family and helping out our neighbors.
- Same-sex couples have similar worries, like making ends meet or the possibility of losing a job. We want to be there for one another in good times as well as in tough times.
- Gay and lesbian couples share similar hopes and dreams, like finding that special someone to grow old with – and standing in front of friends and family to make a lifetime commitment.

It's as basic as the Golden Rule.

- Treating others as one would want to be treated includes allowing civil marriage for gay couples who are truly committed to each other.
- Marriage strengthens families. It gives you the tools and the security to build a life together, and protect the people we love. And marriage is a key building block for strong communities.
- Marriage says “we are family” in a way that no other word does. There have been attempts to create marriage-like relationship systems, but they don't work. In Oregon, and elsewhere, same-sex couples that have domestic partnerships have been barred from a dying partner's bedside, and denied the ability to say goodbye to the person they love. That just doesn't happen when you're married.

Allowing committed gay and lesbian couples to join in civil marriage does not change the meaning of marriage.

- All couples who marry in Oregon must get a license for a civil marriage, usually obtained at a courthouse or city hall. Oregon could make civil marriage available to same-sex couples.
- Some couples also choose to get married in a religious ceremony. This would not change.
- Civil marriage for gay couples does not affect religious marriages, religious institutions or clergy in any way. No religion would be forced to marry same-sex couples, or recognize same-sex marriages within the context of their religious beliefs.