

RURAL MONTANANS NEED LGBT NONDISCRIMINATION PROTECTIONS

an infographic presented by



State Logo

2.9-3.8 Million LGBT People in Rural America

-Movement Advancement Project, with data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the CDC, and The Williams Institute

An estimated 2.9 to 3.8 million lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people live in rural communities across the United States, and they are part of the fabric of rural American life. LGBT people in rural areas often choose to live there for many of the same reasons that other people do: for the strength of community and connection to family, for the pace of life, or simply to be part of the place where they were raised and call home.

Rural communities also have unique social and political landscapes regarding LGBT people and issues. On average, rural residents are more supportive of LGBT issues than might be imagined: in fact, a majority of rural residents support LGBT policies, including nondiscrimination protections. However, majority-rural states are far less likely to have vital state-level nondiscrimination protections and are more likely to have harmful, discriminatory policies. As a result, LGBT people in rural America are more vulnerable to discrimination (including state-sanctioned discrimination) and less able to cope with its effects. This is why updating our state's laws to prohibit discrimination is a rural issue.

Quick Facts About Montana

State Rural Population: 436,400	% of State's Counties that are Majority-Rural: 71%	State LGBT Adult Population: 24,000	% of State's Adults Who are LGBT: 2.9%	% of State's LGBT Adults Raising Children: 24%
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According to the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI):



69%
of all Americans support LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination laws

72%
of all Montanans support LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination laws

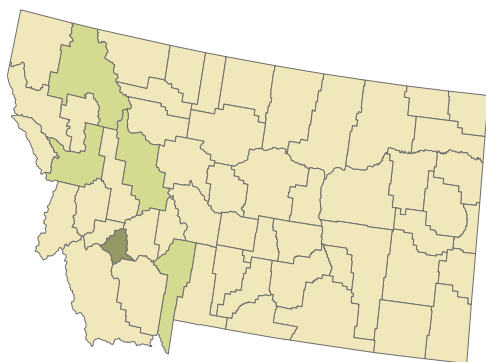
But in Montana, state law does not explicitly and consistently protect LGBT people.

Here's where Montana stands on LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination laws:

- Employment
- Health Care
- Foster Care
- Housing
- Education
- Credit
- Public Accommodations
- Adoption
- State Employees

LGBT

KEY LGB State law covers sexual orientation LGBT State law covers sexual orientation and gender identity/expression State law offers none of these protections



■ County Protections ■ City Protections ■ No Protections ■ NDOs Banned

Only **17%** of LGBT Montanans are protected from discrimination* by local law

State profile: <https://tinyurl.com/MontanaLGBT>

A majority of rural Americans support LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination protections, with even higher support among rural women, rural people of color, and younger rural residents.



State population numbers are from the U.S. Census and The Williams Institute. Data on public support for LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination policies from PRRI's American Values Atlas.

*Percent of state's population protected by local ordinances from discrimination in employment, housing, and/or public accommodations, as of April 2019. See <http://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/>.

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Why Do We Need Nondiscrimination Laws?



- Many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people still experience discrimination when going about their daily life—whether eating at a restaurant, trying to obtain safe housing, or applying for a job or a loan.
- Nationwide, 69% of all Americans—including 72% of all Montanans—support LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination laws to protect their friends, family members, and neighbors against this kind of discrimination.
- That’s why most people are surprised to learn that federal laws don’t explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, health care, education, credit and lending, and more.
- Only 20 states and Washington D.C. explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity in their nondiscrimination laws in employment, housing, and public accommodations. As a result, **over half of LGBT people in the U.S. live in a state where, under state law, a boss can fire an employee, a landlord could evict a family, and a business could refuse service to someone simply because of who they are.**
- Rural states are less likely to have these vital protections, meaning that rural Americans are especially vulnerable to discrimination.
- Protecting people from discrimination, including LGBT people, is about treating others as we want to be treated. Even though we may have different beliefs, what’s most important is focusing on what we have in common—taking pride in our work, making a safe home for our family, and being able to safely and freely participate in our local community.
- Respect shouldn’t depend on your zip code. Therefore, it’s crucial that federal, state, and local nondiscrimination laws are updated to explicitly ensure that LGBT people are able to participate fully in society and provide for themselves and their families.

What Can You Do to Protect Your Constituents?



- Update federal, state, and local laws to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity in:

Private Employment	Public Employment
Housing	Credit and Lending
Public Accommodations	Education
Health Care	Adoption
Medicaid	Foster Care
- Work to eliminate harmful religious exemptions laws that may allow taxpayer-funded discrimination, as well as other efforts to harm LGBT people and roll back LGBT freedom.
- Repeal laws that allow individuals, businesses, and/or service providers (such as doctors, pharmacists, adoption or foster care agencies, and more) to discriminate against minority faiths, immigrants, people of color, LGBT people and their children, single parents, unmarried couples, women who are eligible for birth control under the Affordable Care Act, and unmarried and/or divorced pregnant women on the basis of religious beliefs.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EXPERIENCES OF LGBT PEOPLE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE NEW REPORT

WHERE WE CALL HOME: LGBT PEOPLE IN RURAL AMERICA

www.lgbtmap.org/rural-lgbt

View your state’s LGBT policy profile at www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps



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