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In Brief

by Kevin Cathcart
Lambda Legal
Executive Director

May 1 (May Day) marks the official celebration of workers in many parts of the world, but this year we've set aside another day in May to call attention to workplace issues in America. The date is May 15, and the event is Clock In for Equality, the first-ever national day of action to support workplace fairness for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and people living with HIV. Thousands of people across the country will take part.

Lambda Legal is coordinating the national effort and hosting seven flagship events around the country. Staff and our partner organizations will be at the State Capitol in Atlanta, the GLBT Chamber of Commerce in Dallas, DowAgrosciences in Indianapolis, the UCLA Labor Center in Los Angeles and other key locations. We have also signed up over 160 groups and 1,200 individuals, representing LGBT and HIV-affected people and allies in every state, to stand up for workplace fairness on May 15, even if simply by wearing a button or sticker to work.

Clock In for Equality could not be coming at a better time. A few weeks ago, lawmakers re-introduced the federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), and many people have already started lobbying in earnest to finally pass a national law that would protect people from discrimination in the workplace based on sexual

Clock In for Equality * May 15, 2007

On Tuesday, May 15, thousands of individuals and more than 100 organizations will be participating in Lambda Legal's national day of action to advance employment rights for LGBT people and people with HIV. Join others across the country to improve policies, pass laws or educate others about the need for workplace protections. [Sign up today!](#)



Equal Pay for Equal Work

Larry deGroen and Faun Patzer put their lives on the line for the people of Bellevue, Washington, each day they go to work as firefighters and paramedics. George Einsetler assists members of the public when they're at their most vulnerable as a lead 911 dispatcher for the city. They have all served the city for more than 10 years with distinction, but they're being denied valuable family benefits that are offered to their heterosexual married co-workers. Last month [Lambda Legal filed a suit against the city of Bellevue](#) seeking equal family benefits for its gay and lesbian public employees as an issue of basic fairness.



The Blame Game

When [Nancy Wadington](#) attended Holmdel High School in New Jersey, she endured nearly three years of verbal and physical harassment from other students because she is a lesbian. Wadington and her mother sought help from the school administration, which failed to take effective measures to protect her. [Lambda Legal filed a lawsuit against the school district](#) to enforce the law protecting students from discrimination and abuse. The school filed a separate lawsuit against the students who harassed Wadington, attempting to shift the blame to the very students it failed to discipline effectively. Last month a judge saw through this tactic and dismissed the second lawsuit, clearing the path to Wadington's day in court.

Got to Be Real

At Lambda Legal we know something about



orientation or gender identity.

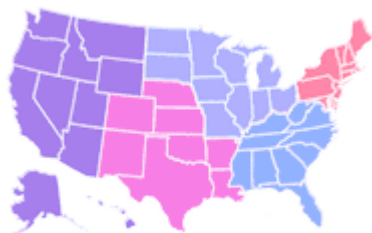
But equally important to having a law is our ability to enforce it. Help us make a law that works for us. [Send a letter to your senators and representative urging them to pass ENDA.](#) And take a day to help us raise awareness about workplace discrimination. The date is May 15, and the event is Clock In for Equality. Please join us.

Help Desk Q&A

Q: I was divorced three years ago, and my ex-wife and I have joint custody of our two children. I recently transitioned from male to female, and my ex-wife is saying that I am no longer a fit parent and is attempting to get sole custody. What can I do to stop her?

A: Gender identity, like sexual orientation, does not limit someone's ability to be a good parent. Unfortunately, custody disputes can bring out the worst in people, and a non-transgender parent seeking custody will sometimes argue that the transgender parent's identity somehow harms the children. A number of family courts around the country have properly applied the *best interests of the child* standard, focusing on the quality of the parenting relationship and recognizing that a parent's transgender identity (like gay, lesbian or bisexual identity) does not hurt children. Unfortunately, though, some judges let biases or misinformation get in the way of fair determinations. If your transgender status is being used against you in a custody dispute, [contact Lambda Legal's Help Desk for assistance.](#)

Events Around the Country



Lambda Legal Newsroom

East Coast: The New York State Department of Civil Service extends spousal insurance benefits to same-sex spouses of government employees who married out-of-state. **West Coast:**

telling stories. Every year our Help Desks hear from thousands of Americans who have experienced discrimination because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or HIV status. But our communities' stories go beyond discrimination, and Lambda Legal's national sponsor Stolichnaya® Vodka has captured some of these stories on film. Watch these stories come to life by planning a Lambda Legal house party and previewing Stoli's *Be Real*, a new series on LOGO. [Read more >>](#)



Count Down to Clock In

Lambda Legal's ["Clock In for Equality"](#) is just six days away, and already it's a huge success! More than 160 organizations and 1,200 individuals across the country have signed on to support workplace rights for LGBT people and those with HIV. Make sure to [RSVP for one of the seven Lambda Legal events](#) taking place on May 15, or [check our website for simple things you can do](#) to help win workplace equality. **Clock In. Speak Out. Sign Up!**

Give Us Liberty!

On Monday, Lambda Legal supporters from around the country celebrated the 21st annual Liberty Awards National Dinner in New York City. The event raised more than \$1 million and brought together two of the oldest organizations fighting for the rights of LGBT people and those with HIV — Lambda Legal and Gay Men's Health Crisis. Marjorie Hill, Chief Executive Officer of GMHC, accepted a Liberty Award on behalf of GMHC for its 25 years of service to our communities. Make sure to check www.lambdalegal.org next Monday to catch a glimpse of all the action at the Love and Pride photo gallery.



No Law Against Laughing

This month in Lambda Legal's ["Life Without Fair Courts,"](#) a [man is denied a court-appointed lawyer](#) and [peaceful protestors are arrested](#) for supporting an unpopular opinion. This is the fifth installment of our monthly alternate reality cartoon series depicting what life would be like if courts had not upheld the Constitution in past landmark cases. Lambda Legal's "Life Without Fair Courts" illustration contest, with [Prism Comics](#) and media sponsor [The Advocate](#), stopped taking submissions last month, but online voting to pick the winners will begin this summer. Stay tuned for details.

[Join Lambda Legal today and your gift could be doubled.](#)



Lambda Legal launches a case on behalf of government employees in Bellevue, Washington, to win equal employment benefits for same-sex partners. See what our attorneys have to say in [Lambda Legal's "In the News."](#)

Support Lambda Legal today.

[Make a donation](#) and support Lambda Legal's groundbreaking impact litigation, public education and advocacy work.

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