



How will this proposed rule affect people with LGBTQ+ parents?

The scope of this proposed rule change cannot be fully known at this time, but what *is* known is that this rule opens the door to immeasurable harm to LGBTQ+ members of our community and their children. For example:

- Prospective children of LGBTQ+ parents (“COLAGers”) in foster care would be denied their right to a loving family based on the personal religious beliefs of individual child welfare agencies. Along that same line, a child-placing agency could refuse to work with parents who do not share their religious beliefs.
- Youth may be forced to witness government-sanctioned discrimination against their parents, further ostracizing COLAGers from peers with non-LGBTQ+ parents who are otherwise granted protection against discrimination.
- Children of LGBTQ+ parents could be turned away from childcare programs altogether.
- In fact, children of LGBTQ+ parents/caregivers could be turned away from a number of ground-level service providers of HHS programs under the claim that serving COLAGers would violate their religious beliefs.
- Youth in foster care and other child welfare agencies will be told or will learn through observation that non-LGBTQ+ families are the only “acceptable” kind of family.

Keep in mind:

- There are 440,000 youth in the United States foster care system who need unabridged access to prospective parent(s) in order to find their forever homes. This proposed rule would limit the pool of homes available to those 440,000 children because it would allow agencies to turn away safe, qualified, loving parents.
- With approximately 200,000 youth in the United States being raised by a same-sex couple and between 2 and 3 million youth with at least one LGBTQ+ parent, the widespread negative impact of this rule cannot be understated.
- This rule would welcome discrimination against our families in publicly funded child welfare agencies—meaning our tax dollars will fund discrimination against our families. Taxpayer dollars should never be used to harm vulnerable community members, but that’s *exactly* what this rule would allow.
- The Trump administration is using Congress’ inability to pass legislation explicitly forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, and religion as *carte blanche* to remove any and all protections for our families in federal programs.

These talking points were developed by and for people with LGBTQ+ parents and caregivers through COLAGE. If you have any questions, please contact:

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