

Talking Points for Clock In 2008



What Is Clock In: Pledge-a-Thon for Workplace Equality?

Clock In is Lambda Legal's second national day of action to advance the employment rights of LGBT people and people living with HIV. May 15, 2008, is our educational Pledge-a-Thon for Workplace Equality. By signing the pledge, you can help fight workplace discrimination. Help us to reach our goal of collecting thousands of pledges from people across the country. On May 15, when we tally the pledges, we want individuals, and organizations hold their own Pledge activity, or simply, find some time during the day to educate people about workplace discrimination and invite others to sign the pledge.

Why Is Workplace Equality Important?

LGBT people and people living with HIV face real discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

In Lambda Legal's 2005 Workplace Fairness Survey, 39% of respondents reported experiencing some form of discrimination or harassment in the workplace during the past five years because of their sexual orientation (gender identity or HIV status as well?). Of the 5,000+ calls to Lambda Legal's national Helpdesk hotline in 2006, questions concerning the rights of LGBT employees were by far the most common complaints received.

The Pledge-a-Thon For Workplace Equality is Lambda Legal's response to a very real need in the community: creating and maintaining discrimination-free workplaces for LGBT people and people with HIV.

There is still no federal law that expressly forbids discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in workplaces in the private sector. In 30 states, there is no statewide law providing express protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation in the workplace; and in 40 states, there is no statewide law providing express protection against discrimination based on gender identity in the workplace.

Although the Americans with Disabilities Act and similar state laws protect people with HIV from discrimination, people with HIV still experience workplace discrimination due to confidentiality breaches, unjustified fears about transmission, and employers' refusals to provide reasonable accommodations.

What Does Lambda Legal Hope To Accomplish With the Pledge-a-Thon For Workplace Equality?

Recent polls show that close to 90% of people in the United States believe lesbians and gay men should have equal rights in the workplace, but how many have actually been asked to do anything about it? We believe that in order to achieve workplace equality, we need to build a much larger and more vocal community. With the Pledge-a-Thon we hope to identify and activate thousands of people committed to combating workplace discrimination

of LGBT people and people living with HIV. We want to send the message that *everyone* can help stop workplace discrimination.

Our goals for the day are to:

- Educate the public, our allies and ourselves, about the realities of harassment and discrimination LGBT people and people living with HIV experience at work.
- Build a broad, vocal and visible base of support for workplace equality
- Make a difference

Collectively we make a greater impact than each of us acting alone.

How Can My Organization/Workplace Get Involved?

There are several simple ways your organization(s) can participate. You can choose one or all of the following activities.

Become an Organizational Partner: Send your members, listservs or other contact lists an email asking them to sign the Pledge. You may include the link www.lambdalegal.org/clockin in your email or add the logo to your organization's website, blog, MySpace and Facebook pages.

Pledge-a-Thon Event: Plan an educational or advocacy event to take place on May 15. Just remember to ask attendees to sign the pledge. Order free buttons and stickers on www.lambdalegal.org/clockin. Each order comes with a poster you can use to publicize the day. Download the pledge and other materials from our website. After your event, just fax back the Pledge Tally form on May 15 so your pledges can be counted at the end of the day and mail in your actual pledges to Clock In: Pledge-a-Thon for Workplace Equality, Lambda Legal, 120 Wall Street, 15th Floor, NY, NY 10005-3904.

Pledge-a-Thon Webpage: Go to www.lambdalegal.org/communitynetwork to set up your Pledge-a-Thon web page. There you can personalize your page and message, set a goal for number of pledges you want to generate, and track your progress.

Be a Drop-in Pledge Center: Obtain permission to use the business, school or organization as a Drop-in center where people in your community can go to pick up pledge materials, drop off pledges on May 15 and network with other community members. Inform Clock In (clockin@lambdalegal.org) that you are a Pledge Center and we will list you on our website. Alert your community and collect those pledges! Fax your Pledge Tally form to Clock In.

I'm Only One Person. What Can I Do?

The Pledge-a-Thon is structured to allow each individual or group to participate in the simplest and most comfortable way. There is something everyone can do. Simply signing the pledge is a significant action that anyone can take. But you don't have to stop there. Encourage others to sign the pledge. Order your free buttons and stickers and wear one to work or in your community. With each button and sticker order, you'll also get a poster you can hang to let people know about Clock In. Your one action to Clock In on May 15 will be amplified by thousands of others across the country taking similar actions.

What If I Already Have Protections In My State And/Or Workplace?

You can use the day to educate your coworkers or people in your community about what policies are in place, how they were instituted, why they are needed, and possibly how they can be improved. You can provide support to employees in companies that don't have the same level of protections.

If we are going to win workplace equality it will take all of us working together. Let's start on May 15!