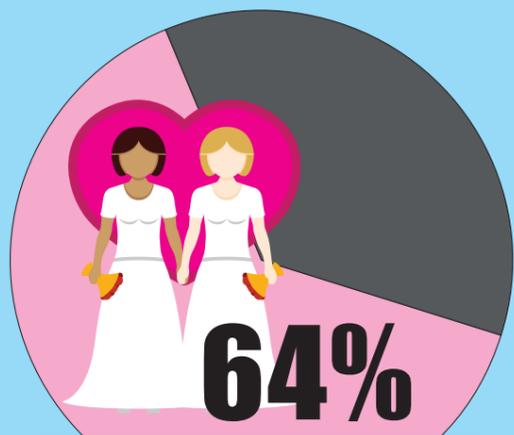




Same Sex DIVORCE



New data suggests that gay and lesbian couples aren't weakening the institution of marriage — they're actually more likely to stay married than heterosexual couples.



Female couples comprise 64% of same-sex couples who legally formalize their relationship with marriage, civil unions, or domestic partnership.

Researchers at the Williams Institute discovered that same-sex couples are less likely to divorce.



- The average divorce rate for same-sex couples is 1.1%
- The average divorce rate for heterosexual couples is 2%

Facing Divorce?

For same-sex couples with children, the combination of state and federal laws pertaining to a marriage can add complexity.



Top 5 Things Same-Sex Couples With Children Need to Know

#1 Know the law in your state regarding custody and support.

While the federal law has changed for same-sex couples, laws regarding custody, support and adoption have not yet all followed suit.



#2 Choose an experienced attorney who you can trust.

It is important that you consult with a lawyer who focuses on family law. Family law attorneys understand same-sex laws in your state and can help you make informed decisions for you and your children.



#3 Review written agreements, if any, related to parenting.

Did you sign an agreement or other contract during your marriage that established parenting routines and responsibilities? Do you have any estate-planning documents that establish intention as it relates to the care of and support for your minor children?



#4 Don't change your routine or responsibilities with your kids.

Intention, routine and previous responsibility weighs heavy in the court's eye. If you want to preserve your relationships with your children beyond your separation, don't walk away because your partner says you have no rights.

#5 Understand your financials and child support calculation.

Most states require documentation of your monthly gross income to calculate child support. Expenses related to the children's health insurance, work-related childcare and extracurricular activities are considered when determining the support awarded.



If you find yourself in a position of being asked to leave or wanting to leave your marriage, be sure to protect yourself and seek advice from a professional. The goal is to hire a professional who will guide you through the process and offer valuable information about your rights. Knowledge is a powerful tool and is critical for individuals who may not be aware of their rights.



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