



Equality for LGBT Victims of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence within LGBT communities is as prevalent and dangerous as in heterosexual relationships, yet LGBT victims of domestic violence often do not have equal access to the shelter and support they need to escape an abusive partner.

Working with the [Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project](#) and [The Network/La Red](#), MassEquality supports these 2008 initiatives:

- **Increase state funding for services which focus specifically on preventing domestic violence within the LGBT community and providing support for victims.**

Everyone deserves to feel safe in their home, yet the special difficulties faced by LGBT people are often not properly understood or addressed by traditional domestic violence service organizations - and the amount of state funding available for LGBT-focused domestic violence prevention programs doesn't come close to meeting the great need that is out there.

There are not enough beds available in safe places for LGBT victims, and those that do exist lack the resources to provide adequate staffing, and support. Currently, the only form of shelter specifically for LGBT victims of domestic violence is Safe Homes, which are typically two-week stays, often in largely unstaffed settings. The short length of stay and the impending homelessness at the end of that short stay leads many LGBT victims to stay with their abusive partners rather than risk becoming homeless.

Increased funding for programs that provide safe home services to LGBT victims would allow them to more than double the number of available beds, ensure 24/7 staffing and support at all safe homes, and increase the available length of stay to 90 days - thus providing LGBT domestic violence victims with more equal access to the resources they need stay safe.

Note: to view the online version of this document, please visit:
<http://www.massequality.org/ourwork/equality/domesticviolence/>