

## Social Security Column

### SOCIAL SECURITY'S COMMITMENT TO THE LGBTQI+ COMMUNITY

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June is Pride Month. It's a time to acknowledge the LGBTQI+ community and also celebrate diversity, love, and respect. On June 26, 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, holding that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry in all states.

We recognize same-sex marriages in all states, as well as some nonmarital legal relationships (such as some civil unions and domestic partnerships). This recognition is important to determine entitlement to benefits.

Here are a few things you should know about our benefits for same-sex couples:

- **Marital status is important** — A member of a same-sex couple may be entitled to benefits when a spouse receives retirement or disability, or dies. We also consider marital

status when we determine eligibility and payment amount for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

- **What type of benefits you can receive** — Social Security taxes pay for 3 kinds of benefits: retirement, disability, and survivors. If you're entitled to benefits, your spouse and eligible family members may receive benefits, too.
- **When you apply for benefits is important** — If you're married or have entered a nonmarital legal relationship, we encourage you to apply right away, even if you're not sure you're eligible. Applying now may protect you against the loss of any potential benefits.
- **Report life changes right away** — You should let us know if you move, marry, separate, divorce, enter into (or leave) a nonmarital legal relationship, or become the parent of a child. Let us know if you change your name. You should report changes as soon as possible so benefits are paid correctly.

For more information, please visit our website for same-sex couples at

[www.ssa.gov/people/lgbtq](http://www.ssa.gov/people/lgbtq). You can also read our publication *What Same-Sex Couples Need to Know* at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10014.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10014.pdf).

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