

Media Release

Martin Foley MP

Minister for Housing, Disability & Ageing

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Creative Industries

Minister for Equality



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HISTORIC DAY FOR VICTORIA: ADOPTION EQUALITY STARTS NOW

From today, changes to the *Adoption Amendment (Adoption by Same-Sex Couples) Act 2015* in Victoria allow couples to adopt regardless of their sex or gender identity.

These changes mean that LGBTI couples can adopt under the same circumstances as any other couple.

The reforms are an important part of the Andrews Labor Government's equality agenda for LGBTI Victorians. The Act reflects the fact that a person's sexual orientation or gender identity is distinct from their capacity to be a loving and caring parent.

The increase in families applying to adopt will mean that there will be more opportunities for children to be matched with the best possible family.

The paramount consideration of courts in considering adoption applications remains the best interests of the child to be adopted. Other safeguards continue to apply, such as the requirement that applicants are fit and proper persons.

Adoption agencies in Victoria are available to assist applicants.

Intercountry Adoption Victoria (IAV) will handle queries in relation to adoption in the context of overseas surrogacy and is providing extra resources to handle these queries, including providing initial, specific advice and guidance for parents applying to adopt in this situation.

Those who are interested in applying to adopt should visit www.dhs.vic.gov.au/adoption or contact their local Adoption and Permanent Care team.

Quotes attributable to Equality Minister Martin Foley

"Today is an historic day in Victoria –we're another step closer to equality for thousands of same-sex families."

"This law brings much needed certainty for many children and their parents who currently live in a legal haze in terms of their relationships with the people they love."

"This Government is proud of its equality agenda. While the Turnbull Government has refused to bring a vote for marriage equality in the Federal Parliament, we're moving to improve recognition for LGBTI couples in Victoria."