Religious Exemption Laws

No updates needed since May 13, 2023

**Broad Religious Exemption Laws (“RFRAs”):** Broad state religious exemption laws, sometimes called “Religious Freedom Restoration Acts” or RFRAs, permit people, churches, non-profit organizations, and sometimes corporations to seek exemptions from state laws that burden their religious beliefs. The individual person or organization must seek out an exemption, such as through court proceedings.

**Targeted Religious Exemptions:** Targeted exemptions provide a blanket exemption, or license to discriminate, to anyone operating in a specific area such as child welfare services, medical care, businesses serving the public, or government officials/employees solemnizing marriages.

- **Child Welfare Services:** Permits child-placing agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs.
- **Medical Providers:** Permits medical providers to refuse to serve LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with the provider’s (or provider’s employer’s) religious beliefs.
- **Business Services:** Permits businesses to deny services (such as wedding-related services) to LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs.
- **State Officials/Marriage Solemnization:** Permits state and local government employees and officials to decline to marry couples of whose marriage they disapprove.

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**Alabama**

- State has **broad** constitutional religious exemption law. See [AL Const. Art I, §3.01](1999).
- State has **targeted** religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See [HB24](2017).
  - This exemption is only permitted for agencies that do not receive government funding.
- State has **targeted** religious exemption that permits medical professionals to decline to serve LGBTQ people and others. See [HB95](2017).

**Alaska**

- State has none of these religious exemption laws

**Arizona**

- State has **broad** statutory religious exemption law. See [Ariz. Rev. Stat. §41-1493.01](1999).
- State has **targeted** religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See [SB1399](2022).
Arkansas
  • State has broad statutory religious exemption law. See SB975 (2015).
  • State has targeted religious exemption that permits medical professionals to decline to serve LGBTQ people and others. See SB289 (2021). See also SB199 (2023) that specifically says “State law shall not require, or be construed to require, a healthcare professional to perform a gender transition procedure.”

California
  • State has none of these religious exemption laws

Colorado
  • State has none of these religious exemption laws

Connecticut

Delaware
  • State has none of these religious exemption laws

District of Columbia
  • State has none of these religious exemption laws

Florida
  • State has targeted religious exemption that permits medical professionals to decline to serve LGBTQ people and others. See S1580 (2023).

Georgia
  • State has none of these religious exemption laws

Hawai`i
  • State has none of these religious exemption laws

Indiana
  • State has broad statutory religious exemption law. See IN Code Sec. 1.IC 34-13-9 or SB101 (2015).
Iowa
- State has none of these religious exemption laws

Kansas
- State has broad statutory religious exemption law. See K.S.A. 60-5301-05 (2013).
- State has targeted religious exemption that that permits private businesses to deny services to married same-sex couples. See Kansas Executive Order 15-05 (2015).
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See SB 284 (2018).

Kentucky

Louisiana

Maine
- State has none of these religious exemption laws

Maryland
- State has none of these religious exemption laws

Massachusetts
- State has none of these religious exemption laws

Michigan
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs.
  - This exemption is only permitted for agencies that do not receive government funding.

Minnesota
- State has none of these religious exemption laws
Mississippi

- State has broad statutory religious exemption law. See SB 2681 (2014).
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See HB 1523 (2016).
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits medical professionals to decline to serve LGBTQ people and others. See HB 1523 (2016).
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state and local officials to decline to marry couples of whose marriage they disapprove. See HB 1523 (2016).

Missouri


Montana

- State has broad statutory religious exemption law. See SB 215 (2021).
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits medical professionals to decline to serve LGBTQ people and others. See HB303 (2023).

Nebraska

- State has none of these religious exemption laws

Nevada

- State has none of these religious exemption laws

New Hampshire

- State has none of these religious exemption laws

New Jersey

- State has none of these religious exemption laws

New Mexico


New York

- State has none of these religious exemption laws

North Carolina

- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state and local officials to decline to marry couples of whose marriage they disapprove. See N.C. Gen. Stat. § 51-5.5 or SB2 (2015).
North Dakota
- State has broad statutory religious exemption law. See HB1136 (2023).
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See ND Century Code §50-12-07.1 (2003).

Ohio
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits medical professionals to decline to serve LGBTQ people and others. See HB110 (2021; amendment in state budget, see pages 1453-1455).

Oklahoma
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See SB 1140 (2018).

Oregon
- State has none of these religious exemption laws

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

South Carolina
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See HB 4950, §38.29 (2018).
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits medical professionals to decline to serve LGBTQ people and others. See H4776 (2022).

South Dakota
- State has broad statutory religious exemption law. See SB 124 (2021).
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See SB 149 (2017).
Tennessee
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits medical professionals to decline to serve LGBTQ people and others. See TN Code Ann. § 63-22-302 (2016).
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See HB 836 (2020).

Texas
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See HB 3859 (2017).

Utah
- State has targeted religious exemption that applies only to private individuals or agencies (i.e., not state-licensed agencies), and while it allows those private agencies to refuse to serve individuals according to the agencies’ religious beliefs, it also requires the agency to refer those individuals to other agencies. See SB 154 (2023).
- State has targeted law that permits religious officials to decline to marry couples of whose marriage they disapprove. Law only applies to religious officials, not government employees. See Utah Code 63G-20-101 (2015).

Vermont
- State has none of these religious exemption laws

Virginia
- State has targeted religious exemption that permits state-licensed child welfare agencies to refuse to place and provide services to children and families, including LGBTQ people and others, if doing so conflicts with their religious beliefs. See Va. Code Ann § 63.2-1709.3 or S349/H189 (2012).

Washington
- State has none of these religious exemption laws

West Virginia
- State has broad statutory religious exemption law. See HB3042 (2023).

Wisconsin
- State has none of these religious exemption laws
Wyoming
  • State has none of these religious exemption laws

U.S. Territories

American Samoa
  • Territory has none of these religious exemption laws

Guam
  • Territory has none of these religious exemption laws

Northern Mariana Islands
  • Territory has none of these religious exemption laws

Puerto Rico
  • Territory has none of these religious exemption laws

U.S. Virgin Islands
  • Territory has none of these religious exemption laws