

Defense of Marriage

According to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics*, “Social Workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person and treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. **Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion or mental or physical disability.** Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people. **Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, or mental or physical disability.**” *NASW Code of Ethics(2008), Washington, DC*

“NASW opposes laws that allow discrimination against lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, including in immigration, employment, housing, professional credentialing, licensing, public accommodation, child custody, and the right to marry. NASW encourages the adoption of laws that recognize inheritance, insurance, same-sex marriage, child custody, property, and other relationship rights for lesbian, gay, and bisexual people.” – *NASW Policy Statement on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Issues*

In September 2011, legislators approved a bill that would allow voters to cast votes on **May 8th, 2012** (Primary Election Day in NC) in support or opposition to amending our state Constitution to include that marriage between one man and one woman be the only recognized union. **NASW-NC is OPPOSED to this amendment.** Discrimination in our Constitution is not the right direction for NC. It lessens our attraction for business and industries that we need to boost our economy and employees they hire. Social workers are expected to practice in a non-discriminatory way and this amendment would put limitations on our professionals practicing with clients. Our *Code of Ethics* is the core of our profession and such discrimination goes against our practice. For the sake of our professionals and our citizens, please oppose this addition to our State Constitution.

For more information from NASW:

NASW Code of Ethics

<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>

NASW Policy Statements: Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Issues

<http://www.socialworkers.org/resources/abstracts/default.asp>