

February 14, 2012

Washington Passes Marriage Equality Act

On February 13, 2012, Governor Gregoire signed into law the Marriage Equality Act, which provides “equal protection for all families in Washington by creating equality in civil marriage and changing the domestic partnership laws.”

Washington already provides equal rights to unmarried couples (whether gay, lesbian, or heterosexual) who enter into registered domestic partnerships. The Act goes further by permitting gay and lesbian couples to enter into civil marriages.

The Act will go into effect on June 7, 2012, although opponents are expected to gather sufficient valid voter signatures to force a referendum in November and thus delay implementation of the Act.

Foster Pepper will monitor and provide updates on this breaking development, particularly the impact of the Act on Washington employers.

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