

TENNESSEE'S EQUALITY PROFILE

Quick Facts About Tennessee

Percent of Adults
(18+)

Who are LGBTQ

3.5%

Gallup/Williams 2019

Total LGBTQ
Population (13+)

223,000

Williams 2020

Percent of Workforce
That is LGBTQ

4%

Census 2018; Williams
2020

Total LGBTQ
Workers

133,000

Williams 2020

Percent of LGBTQ
Adults (25+) Raising
Children

29%

Gallup/Williams 2019

Tennessee's LGBTQ Policy Tally



Sexual Orientation Policy

Tally:

-2.75/23



NEGATIVE

Gender Identity Policy

Tally:

-11.25/26



NEGATIVE

Overall Tally:

-14/49

NEGATIVE



MAP's "LGBTQ Policy Tally" examines each state's LGBTQ policy climate, as measured by over 50 pro- or anti-LGBTQ laws and policies. These laws are grouped into seven major categories: relationship and parental recognition; non-discrimination; religious exemptions; LGBTQ youth; healthcare; criminal justice; and the ability for transgender people to correct name and gender markers on identity documents. See the state's full profile for more detailed information.






























Scores as of 04/24/2025. For full state profile, visit: https://www.mapresearch.org/equality_maps/profile_state/TN

Recommended citation: Movement Advancement Project. 2025. "State Equality Profile: Tennessee."
https://www.mapresearch.org/equality_maps/profile_state/TN. Accessed April 24, 2025.

Tennessee's LGBTQ Laws and Policies

Click on each issue for more information and to see where the state fits into the national landscape.

KEY		Indicates state law or policy		Indicates local laws or policies and/or partial law
		Indicates no law or policy		Enumeration not applicable

Relationship and Parental Recognition	Sexual Orientation		Gender Identity	
	Law Exists?	Tally	Law Exists?	Tally
<p>As a result of the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision in Obergefell, same-sex couples can marry nationwide and states must extend all the rights and benefits of marriage to same-sex couples. As a result, the following benefits are available to all married same-sex couples on the same basis they are available to married different-sex couples:</p> <div><div></div> Marriage for Same-Sex Couples</div> <div><div></div> Medical Decision-Making Authority for Married Same-Sex Couples</div> <div><div></div> Stepparent Adoption for Married Same-Sex Couples</div> <div><div></div> Joint Adoption for Married Same-Sex Couples</div>	<div></div>	1/1	<div></div>	<div></div>
Second-Parent Adoption for Unmarried Couples	<div></div>	0/1	<div></div>	<div></div>
Confirmatory Adoption	<div></div>	0/1	<div></div>	<div></div>
Voluntary Acknowledgement of Parentage (VAP)	<div></div>	0/1	<div></div>	<div></div>
Family Services Nondiscrimination Laws				
Adoption Nondiscrimination Protections for LGBTQ Parents	<div></div>	0.5/0.5	<div></div>	0.5/0.5
Foster Care Nondiscrimination Protections for LGBTQ Parents	<div></div>	0.5/0.5	<div></div>	0.5/0.5
Recognition for Parents Using Assisted Reproduction	<div></div>	0/1	<div></div>	<div></div>
State Family Leave Laws				
LGBTQ-Inclusive Definitions of Spouse/Partner	<div></div>	0/0.5	<div></div>	<div></div>
LGBTQ-Inclusive Definitions of Children/Parents	<div></div>	0.25/0.5	<div></div>	<div></div>
Subtotal	2.25/7		1/1	
Relationship and Parental Recognition Total	3.25/8			

State Nondiscrimination Laws	Sexual Orientation		Gender Identity	
	Law Exists?	Tally	Law Exists?	Tally
As a result of a June 2020 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, people in all states can seek recourse for employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity through the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and federal courts.				
Employment Nondiscrimination Laws*	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Housing Nondiscrimination Laws*	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Public Accommodations Nondiscrimination Laws*	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Credit and Lending Nondiscrimination Laws	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Nondiscrimination Policies for State Employees	✗	0/0.5	✗	0/0.5
Negative Law: State Bans Cities and Counties from Passing Nondiscrimination Laws	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Negative Law: State Bans Transgender People From Using Bathrooms or Facilities Consistent With Their Gender Identity In Government-Owned Buildings			No Negative Law	0/-1
Negative Law: State Explicitly Defines “Sex” Throughout State Law To Exclude Transgender People			NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Subtotal	-1/4.5		-2/4.5	
Nondiscrimination Total	-3/9			

*If state lacks statewide law, tally looks at local Nondiscrimination ordinances in employment, housing, and public accommodations and provides partial points based on percent of LGBTQ population covered by local laws.

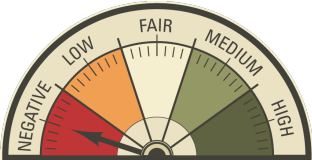
Religious Exemption Laws	Sexual Orientation		Gender Identity	
	Law Exists?	Tally	Law Exists?	Tally
Negative Law: Broad "RFRA" or Religious Exemption Law	NEGATIVE LAW	-0.5/-0.5	NEGATIVE LAW	-0.5/-0.5
Negative Law: Targeted Religious Exemption for Child Welfare Services	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Negative Law: Targeted Religious Exemption for Medical Professionals	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Negative Law: Targeted Wedding Services				
Private Wedding Services	No Negative Law	0/-0.5	—	—
State and Local Officials Providing Marriage Licenses	NEGATIVE LAW	-0.5/-0.5	—	—
Subtotal	-3/-3.5		-2.5/-2.5	
Religious Exemption Laws Total	-5.5/-6			

LGBTQ Youth Laws and Policies	Sexual Orientation		Gender Identity	
	Law Exists?	Tally	Law Exists?	Tally
Nondiscrimination Laws and Policies Covering LGBTQ Students	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Anti-Bullying Laws and Policies Covering LGBTQ Students	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Negative Law: Laws Banning Local Schools and Districts from Passing LGBTQ Nondiscrimination and/or Anti-Bullying Policies	No Negative Law	0/-1	No Negative Law	0/-1
State Curricular Standards Required to Be LGBTQ-Inclusive	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Negative Law: "Don't Say LGBTQ" Law Barring or Explicitly Restricting Educators From Discussing LGBTQ People or Issues in Schools	No Negative Law	0/-1	No Negative Law	0/-1
Negative Law: State Law Requires Parental Notification of LGBTQ-Inclusive Curricula and Allows Parents to Opt Children Out	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Negative Law: State Law Restricts Discussions of "Homosexuality" in Specific School Subjects	No Negative Law	0/-0.5	—	—
Negative Law: State Law Prevents Transgender Students from Participating in Sports Consistent With Their Gender Identity	—	—	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Negative Law: State Law Prevents Transgender Students from Using School Facilities Consistent With Their Gender Identity	—	—	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Negative Law: Forced Outing of Transgender Youth in Schools	—	—	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Conversion Therapy Ban Covering LGBTQ Youth	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Protections for LGBTQ Youth in the Child Welfare System	✓	1/1	✓	1/1
Subtotal	0/5		-3/5	
LGBTQ Youth Laws Total	-3/10			

Healthcare Laws and Policies	Sexual Orientation		Gender Identity	
	Law Exists?	Tally	Law Exists?	Tally
Private Health Insurance Nondiscrimination Laws	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Negative Law: Ban on Best Practice Medical Care for Transgender Youth	—	—	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
"Shield" Laws Protecting Access to Transgender Health Care	—	—	✗	0/1
Health Insurance Providers Banned from Excluding Coverage for Transgender-Specific Care	—	—	✗	0/1
State Medicaid Policy Related to Coverage for Transgender People	—	—	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/1
Negative Law: Transgender Inclusive Health Benefits for State Employees	—	—	NEGATIVE LAW	-0.5/0.5
Data Collection				
LGBTQ Adults	✗	0/0.5	✗	0/0.5
LGBTQ Youth	✗	0/0.5	✗	0/0.5
Fertility Treatment Coverage in Private Insurance	✗	0/1	✗	0/1
Fertility Treatment Coverage in Medicaid	✗	0/0.5	✗	0/0.5
Fertility Preservation Coverage in Private Insurance	—	—	✗	0/1
Fertility Preservation Coverage in Medicaid	—	—	✗	0/0.5
Subtotal	0/3.5		-2.5/8.5	
Healthcare Total	-2.5/12			

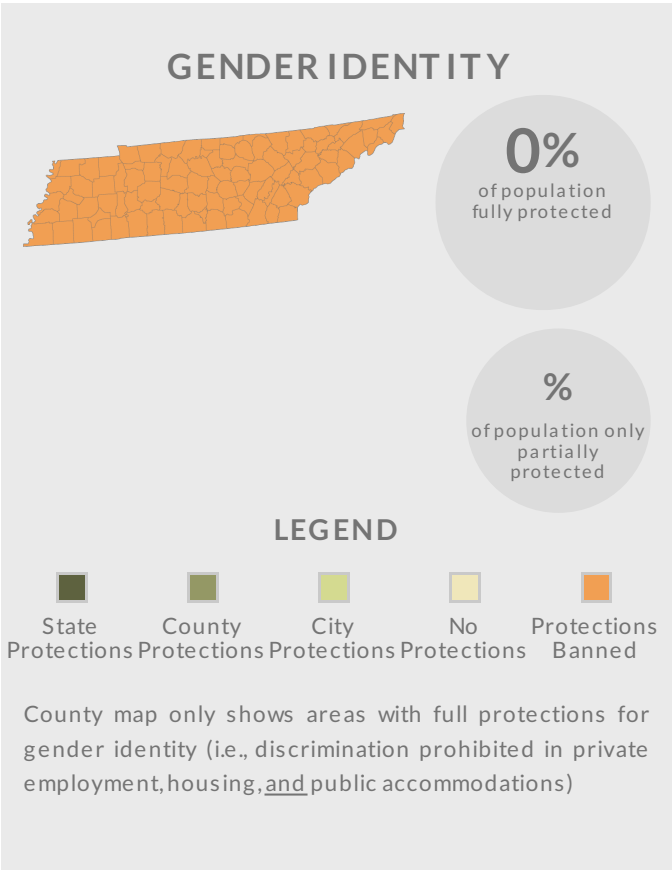
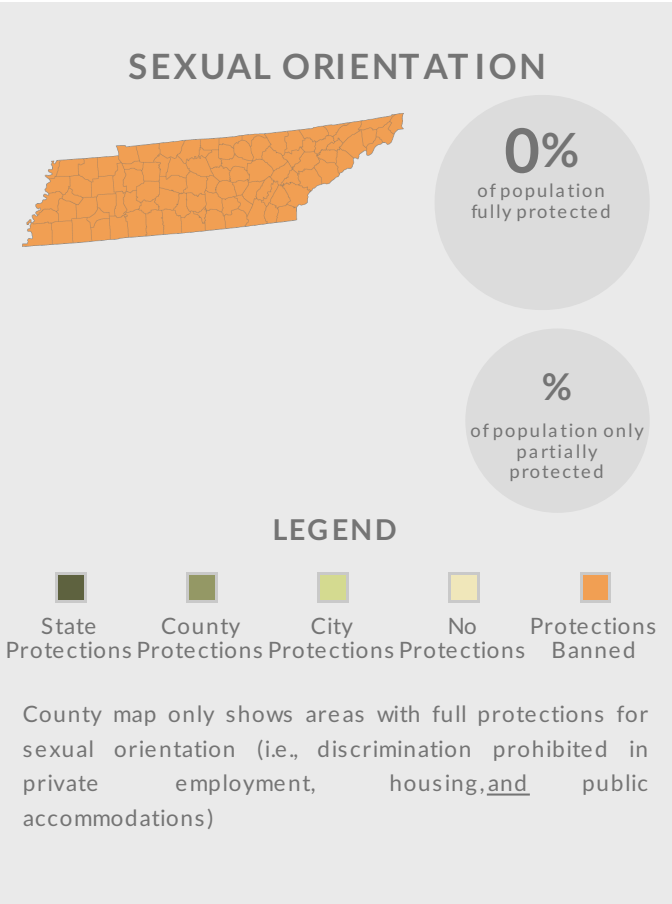
Criminal Justice Laws and Policies	Sexual Orientation		Gender Identity	
	Law Exists?	Tally	Law Exists?	Tally
Hate Crime Law Covering LGBTQ People	<div>✓</div>	1/1	<div>✓</div>	0.75/1
Ban on Panic Defense	<div>✗</div>	0/1	<div>✗</div>	0/1
Jury Service Nondiscrimination	<div>✗</div>	0/1	<div>✗</div>	0/1
Negative Law: HIV Criminalization Law	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Negative Law: Restrictions on Drag Performances	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/-1
Subtotal	-1/3		-1.25/3	
Criminal Justice Total	-2.25/6			

Ability for Transgender People to Correct Name and Gender Marker on Identity Documents	Sexual Orientation		Gender Identity	
	Law Exists?	Tally	Law Exists?	Tally
Changing Gender Marker on Driver's Licenses	—	—	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/1
Changing Gender Marker on Birth Certificates	—	—	NEGATIVE LAW	-1/1
Gender Neutral Options				
"X" Option on Driver's Licenses	—	—	✗	0/0.5
"X" Option on Birth Certificates	—	—	✗	0/0.5
Name Change Process	—	—	✓	1/1
Subtotal	—		-1/4	
Identity Documents Total	-1/4			



Grand Totals	Sexual Orientation Policy Tally	Gender Identity Policy Tally	Overall Tally
Totals	-2.75/23	-11.25/26	-14/49
Ratings	NEGATIVE	NEGATIVE	NEGATIVE

Local Nondiscrimination Ordinances



This data was collected in collaboration with the [Equality Federation](#), [Tennessee Transgender Political Coalition](#), and [Tennessee Equality Project](#) and is maintained by MAP.

Local Conversion Therapy Ordinances

