



Welcome To All

Quick Facts

1. Louisville has earned a perfect 100 on the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index every year since 2015. Louisville was the first city in the state to receive a perfect score. The rating is reflective of the Louisville's support of the LGBTQ+ community and its work to make the city welcoming and inclusive.
2. Louisville was the first (1999) of nine cities in Kentucky that have passed the LGBTQ Fairness Ordinance
3. The University of Louisville was named one of the most LGBT-conscious campuses in all of the South, according to the Campus Pride Index.
4. In 2015, Jefferson County Public Schools, the largest public school district in the state of Kentucky, officially amended their anti-discrimination policy to include gender identity and gender expression.
5. Louisville is a Model City of Compassion in America. Former Mayor Greg Fischer signed a resolution committing to a multi-year Compassionate Louisville campaign on November 11, 2011. Fischer's action meant that Louisville was recognized as an international compassionate city, one of the largest city in America with that distinction.
6. You can't spell Louisville without LOVE, use this link for more resources and accolades: <https://www.gotolouisville.com/things-to-do/history/lgbtq/>

Travel Bans and Boycotts

California Travel Ban Ends | September 13, 2023

Senate Bill 447

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB447

What was the "California travel ban"?

A 2017 California law (Assembly Bill 1887 or AB1887) that bans state-funded or state-sponsored travel to states that they view "authorize or require discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression." There are 21 states currently included in the ban.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB447

Why was Kentucky included in the California travel ban?

Senate Bill 17 (SB17) is a 2017 Kentucky law designed to protect religious freedoms at public schools and post-secondary institutions in the state. The law has been criticized by LGBT advocates, who contend that this last provision permits student organizations to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. The law allows students to express religious views in their assignments, allows teachers to include religious lessons, and permits school clubs and other campus organizations to exclude members on religious grounds.

Hospitality & Tourism Industry Response

Travel bans and boycotts can have a considerable economic impact, however, their effect on policy is less consistent. These mixed results are reflected in the attitudes of travelers and meeting planners, who are split as to whether boycotts are effective.

U.S. Travelers' perceived effectiveness of travel weaponization is split as well with 43% saying they somewhat or strongly agree and 44% saying they somewhat or strongly disagree.ⁱ



"It's not at all clear that travel bans and boycotts are ultimately effective at advancing the agendas of their advocates. What is clear is that boycotts have enormous potential for collateral damage — namely to the jobs of travel and tourism workers whose livelihoods depend on visitation to their region."

— Roger Dow, President and CEO, U.S. Travel



"Beyond holding our industry hostage, which impacts jobs, travel boycotts and bans are by nature counterproductive to the goal of seeking philosophical change because they isolate people instead of bringing them together."

— Don Welsh, President and CEO, Destinations International

Additional Resources: <https://destinationsinternational.org/resource/travel-bans-boycotts>

Louisville's Response

Louisville continues to be a welcoming destination. It's why Louisville is ranked "one of the friendliest cities in America" by *Travel + Leisure* and why nearly 75% of all visitors rank the "friendliness of the people," as a top reason they would plan a return trip.ⁱⁱ

“Mayor Greenberg’s top priorities have included moving Louisville in a new direction...and fighting for the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community.”

"What we're celebrating today and throughout Pride Month deserves to be celebrated and supported and strengthened every single day of the year," Greenberg said. "We have to do that. Us. Here. Now."

-Mayor Craig Greenburg

“This is not an anti-transgender bathroom bill, nor is it a license to discriminate that would remove LGBT fairness ordinances in the eight Kentucky cities that have them. Instead, Senate Bill 17 is a mostly redundant law that reiterates existing political and religious speech protections for Kentucky students granted by the U.S. and Kentucky Constitutions. If Senate Bill 17 is used in any way to further marginalize LGBT or other students, we believe it could be challenged on constitutional and/or civil rights protections, based on the particulars of the case.”

- Chris Hartman, Executive Director of the Fairness Campaign and member of the Louisville Tourism’s LGBTQ Task Force

“Louisville has a long history of being a welcoming, inclusive city. In December 1967, Louisville became the first major city in the South to pass an open housing law, forbidding discrimination in the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin and sex.

In 1999, we were among the first cities in the South to pass a Fairness Ordinance, extending protection from discrimination to include sexual orientation and gender identity.

And in 2011, I proudly signed an executive order allowing domestic partner health benefits for city workers -- years before the U.S. Supreme Court declared that the Constitution requires that same-sex couples be allowed to marry no matter where they live.

These are the kind of actions that resulted in our city scoring a perfect 100 on the Human Rights Campaign scorecard for multiple years in a row.”

- Former Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer

Louisville Tourism Initiatives

“52 Places to Go in 2023” - *New York Times*

<https://www.gotolouisville.com/media/news-stories/louisville-makes-prestigious-new-york-times-travel-list/>

“Say I Do In Lou!”

On the heels of the Supreme Court ruling on Marriage Equality in June 2015, the Louisville CVB launched its first LGBT tourism initiative. Say I Do In Lou welcomed LGBT couples to get married in Louisville and

culminated with an all-expenses-paid wedding for one couple. (Angela Brent and Christy Smith of Fort Wayne, Ind., were the winners of a wedding during the six-week digital campaign that ran on the CVB's official Facebook page).

Say I Do In Lou was truly a city-wide effort, as more than a dozen local businesses generously sponsored the wedding, held September 19, 2015. The Hilton Garden Inn Downtown served as the host hotel for the couple, and Chris Hartman (Director of the Louisville Fairness Campaign) served as the officiate of the ceremony at the Henry Clay.

The couple celebrated their reception on the main entertainment stage at the inaugural Louisville Pride Festival in front of more than 12,000 attendees. Mayor Fischer emceed the reception, which included a champagne toast, cake cutting, bouquet toss, first dance and more.

Three national LGBT media outlets (Out Traveler, Passport and Sunny Harbor Publishing) covered Say I Do In Lou. Louisville was also launched into the global spotlight for its LGBT friendliness as a direct result of the Say I Do In Lou tourism initiative – Conde Nast Traveler named the city One of Nine Perfect Places For Your LGBT Destination Wedding.

Louisville Tourism's LGBTQ Hospitality Task Force

The LGBTQ Task Force's goal is to promote the city of Louisville as a destination to the LGBTQ community. The Task Force has:

- Active representation from key LGBT community stakeholders (Mayor's office, Louisville Fairness Campaign, Hotels, Attractions, CVB staff, local Pride organizations)
- Quarterly meetings
- Consistent promoter and sponsor of local Pride Festivals: Kentuckiana Pride & Louisville Pride
- Received the KTIA Traverse Awards for Best PR Campaign and Most Innovative Campaign for "Say I Do in Lou"
- Increased TAG approved hotels city wide from 1 hotel in 2015 to 6 hotels in 2016
- Regular city-wide partner trainings focused on DEI

ⁱ The Weaponization of Travel Toolkit: Dealing with a Travel Ban or Boycott in Your Destination

ⁱⁱ Longwoods International Travel USA Visitor Profile – Louisville 2022