

Proposed activity

Field	Content
Name of Division/Office	Classification, Human Rights and Copyright Division
Title	Removal of discrimination and differential treatment in a range of Commonwealth laws.
Description of issue	The Government has introduced legislation that will amend a range of Commonwealth laws to ensure that same-sex couples and their families are appropriately recognised. The laws to be amended have been identified as a result of an audit conducted by the Attorney-General's Department and as a result of the HREOC inquiry – Same Sex: Same Entitlements in May 2007. The laws to be amended include superannuation, taxation, social security, workplace entitlements and Medicare entitlements.
Consultation opportunities	The HREOC inquiry undertook a significant level of consultation with the community on the operation of laws. The Government is also consulting with representatives of the same-sex community to ensure the smooth implementation of the reforms.
Expected timetable	Legislation to amend laws was introduced in the Winter and Spring 2008 sittings of the Parliament. Passage is subject to Parliamentary debate but it is expected that most amendments will commence the day after Royal Assent. Some amendments will be delayed to allow for administrative changes or to assist individuals affected by the changes to adjust their circumstances. All of the reforms are expected to be implemented by mid 2009.
Contact details	Peter Thomson Principal Legal Officer Sex and Age Discrimination Section Telephone: (02) 6250 6039 Facsimile: (02) 6250 5924 Email: peter.thomson@ag.gov.au
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