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Same-sex marriage: 'Like Love' group to monitor anti-LGBTIQ content during campaign

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Same-sex marriage supporters outside the High Court in Melbourne (AAP)



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A group of trained volunteers from Queensland will form 'Like Love', a group created to monitor forums and social media to report content that incites hatred during the same-sex marriage postal survey.

Anti-gay posters and pamphlets have popped up across Sydney and in inner Brisbane's West End over the last month raising fears of the types of vilification the LGBTI community will face throughout the postal vote.

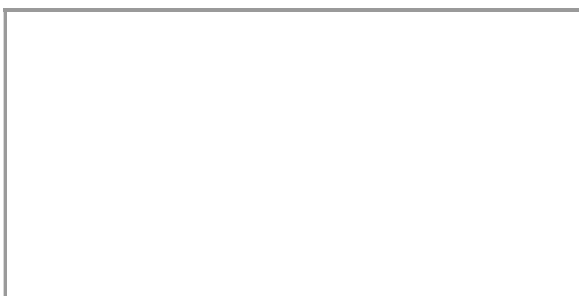


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D. Paul Sullins, "Invisible Victims: Great Depression among Adults w

LGBTI Legal Service President Matilda Alexander said there was a misconception that hate speech was acceptable and part of freedom of speech.

"At the legal service we have seen an increase in hate speech online, in posters, in discussions in the media and there seems to be a misconception that freedom of speech allows you to say whatever you want and vilify people on the basis of their sexuality and their gender identity," Ms Alexander told SBS World News.

"We wanted to make sure firstly, that people know that kind of speech is unlawful and secondly, to have the tool available to be able to make a complaint and bring it to our attention so we can make a complaint to the relevant anti-discrimination body in Queensland."



Same-sex marriage campaign laws banning vilification pass the Senate

Ms Alexander said the group was formed to give individuals a legal shoulder to lean on when combating homophobic slurs.

"We have noticed during the lead up to the postal vote, and even around discussions about the plebiscite, there was a lot of homophobic comments and a lot of homophobia generated in society," Ms Alexander said.

"I think it is important because people are doing their best to combat homophobia and hate speech on an individual level, by replying to it and giving logic around it.

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Tony Abbott's daughter throws support behind 'Yes' vote for same-sex marriage

The former Australian Prime Minister, and staunch supporter of the 'No' campaign, has been upstaged by his daughter's support for same-sex marriage.



Same-sex marriage postal survey mailout ahead of schedule, ABS says

About 7.5 million same-sex marriage postal surveys will have hit letterboxes before the weekend, a Senate inquiry has been told.

"But it is heartbreaking to do that and it's damaging to people's mental health. I think the support that we as a legal service can provide is to give the context that it is unlawful... that you need to screen grab it and send it into us and we will take the appropriate actions to make sure the law is enforced."

The Federal Government passed a new law to protect anyone threatened by banning vilification, intimidation and threats, despite protests from a handful of crossbench senators who warned of a threat to free speech.

Breaking this law could cost up to \$12,600.

The Queensland Government were quick to supply \$7,000 to help train members of Like Love in an attempt to reduce the impact of such vilifying material.



All information collated by Like Love will be sent to the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission for review.

Federal laws outlawing intimidation or threats will apply across all forms of communications.

"These arrangements will apply to communications of all forms, including paid advertising, social media, bulk text messages and telephony, broadcast matter ... and printed material," Finance Minister Mathias Cormann said.

"While the government would like nothing more than for these provisions never to be used, their inclusion gives the parliament the opportunity to send a clear message that hateful and malicious conduct will not be tolerated."

For more information, visit www.lgbtilegalservice.org.

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