

VERMONT NOW HAS EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL PARENTS—EXCEPT AFTER SEPARATION.

Vermont law recognizes that children thrive with loving parents—and that families take many forms. We must ensure that equality endures when a marriage or partnership ends.



Family law for actual families.

Vermont has rejected the notion that there is only one form of family worth protecting.

Parenthood is not defined by gender roles, sexual orientation, gender identity, or even limited to two people.

Yet our law still searches for a primary caregiver. That template fails many actual families.

A 1986 framework still governs.

The law says, if one parent refuses to continue, shared parenting responsibilities must end.

This disrupts the child's existing relationships.

And harms the child and the entire family system.

**RECOGNITION OF ACTUAL FAMILIES EVOLVED.
SEPARATION LAW SHOULD, TOO.**

"Vermont can break the mold and can show parents—straight, gay, married, unmarried, divorced, separated, or single—that co-parenting, co-nurturing, co-decision-making, and cooperating is in the best interest of their children."

Michelle A. Tarnelli, "Joint Custody Presumption in Vermont: A Proposal for Co-Parenting," 36 Vermont Law Review 1015, 1035 (2012).

Families may change. A child's need for safe, lasting connections does not.

Vermont Kids Connected

vermontkidsconnected.org