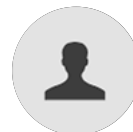




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Source: Allegro Photography/Flickr

# Same-Sex Couples Required To Sign Acknowledgement Of Disapproval Before Judge Will Marry Them



by **ERIC ROSSWOOD**

July 14, 2015 2:50 PM

A Texas judge is requiring couples to acknowledge his disapproval of same-sex marriage before he will marry anyone.

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"Every human being deserves respect."

That quote from Denton County Judge James DePiazza in a telephone interview with The New Civil Rights Movement suggests he actually believes every human being deserves respect, which is why many are confused with why he is requiring all couples to sign a [document](#) acknowledging his disapproval of same-sex marriages before he will agree to marry them.

Judge DePiazza has been a judge in Precinct 2 of Denton County for eight years, and he decided to issue the document to make sure couples would know how he felt about their marriages before he officiated them. At the same time, he wanted to make sure couples did not engage in a conversation or debate with him about his personal beliefs before, during, or after the ceremony.

"It's to let them know where I stand," he said according to the *Houston Chronicle*. "I would want to know that if I was getting married. There are some couples of the same sex who don't want to be married by someone who doesn't believe in same sex marriage."

It seems like Judge DePiazza had given this a lot of thought and was trying to be fair while balancing his religious beliefs; however it's hard to understand why people have to sign an acknowledgement of the judge's personal beliefs before receiving a state approved marriage license.

The [form](#) couples are required to sign says the following:

"Judge DePiazza prefers to NOT conduct same-sex ceremonies, but will not decline anyone who chooses to schedule with him."

Towards the bottom of the form, couples are required to sign the following statement:

“While we may not necessarily agree with, we acknowledge Judge DePiazza’s position that he prefers to not conduct same-sex marriages and agree to not address the topic of same-sex marriages with Judge DePiazza before, during or after the ceremony.”

"I don't support same-sex marriages," Judge DePiazza told NCRM in that phone interview last week, but he also followed it up by saying, "I won't discriminate. Every human being deserves respect." He wanted to make it clear that he is not required to perform marriages (gay or straight), and assured us that it wouldn't be hard for same-sex couples to find an officiant since there are a great many who will officiate in Dallas County.

We're curious to hear your thoughts. If a judge disapproves of same-sex marriage, should couples be required to sign a document acknowledging the disapproval of their marriage before getting married by that judge? Sound off in the comments section below.

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*Your voice makes all the difference*

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written by **DAVID BADASH**

July 14, 2015 1:49 PM

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**RANDY HENDERSON** commented 30 mins ago

No one could have said it better. I worked for the court system for 37 years, and avoiding politics and treating everyone equally was always part of the deal. Times ten that for judges. In California he would be dealing with a Judicial Ethics Committee.



**AL ROMERO** commented 37 mins ago

Judge DePiazza is a PIG! He has no right, NO RIGHT to inject his own personal beliefs into the lives of others. His actions are the very definition of institutional discrimination. He's operating from a place of undeserved privilege, and it's toxic to those who have fought so hard to be treated as equals. Either Judge DePiazza needs to stop his childish behavior, or he needs to be stripped of his authority until he learns the meaning of equality.



**RANDY HENDERSON** commented 1 hour ago

Assuming that you want your marriage to be a special day, why would you consent to have this man marry you? Living in a more civilized state, I am not sure what “judicial ethics” mean in his, but I have a feeling that treating everyone fairly and impartially is in there somewhere. I only hope he lives long enough to be embarrassed publicly for his position. I suspect he will.

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**LIZ DAHNE** *commented 3 hours ago*

Nobody should be required to sign such an acknowledgement. If Judge DePiazza really believes that “Every human being deserves respect,” he should consider showing them some respect by keeping his personal opinions out of the mix. Either that, or any couple—gay or straight—wishing to get married should be able to have him sign an acknowledgement that says “We do not support Judge DePiazza’s bigotry, nor do we think he is qualified to be a justice of the peace. However, since we cannot change either of those sad facts, we are just doing our civil duty and requiring Judge DePiazza to marry us or face litigation. Suck it, DePiazza.” BOOM.

That said, the form that’s been linked to in this article has none of the statements that the article claims are there—so either the article is incorrect (I doubt it, sadly), the link goes to a different document altogether (possible), or the acknowledgement has been updated (most likely).

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**RENEE PAGE** *commented 3 hours ago*

I don’t see how shaming them can be considered respectable.

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