

Clerk: Same-Sex Marriages Might Begin In June

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Same-sex marriages could begin as soon as June 16 in San Diego County, it was reported Thursday.

The state is currently establishing a formal process for the unions following the state Supreme Court's ruling last week that a ban on gay marriages violated California's constitution.

Once the process is set, same-sex ceremonies can be held in San Diego County, The San Diego Union-Tribune reported.

County Assessor-Recorder-Clerk Gregory Smith said he plans to comply with the state's orders but would like to exempt county employees who disagree with same-sex marriage from having to officiate at the ceremonies.

"I'm trying to strike a balance," Smith told the Union-Tribune. "I want to show dignity and respect to my staff and equally I want to show dignity and respect to the couples who want to get married."

Questions have been raised about whether Smith has the power to make such exemptions.

San Diego employment lawyer [Josh Gruenberg](#) told the Union-Tribune that Smith is clearly trying to make everyone happy but is actually "coddling homophobia."

"Imagine how outrageous it would be if he said to his workers, 'You know, if you're offended at helping a black person, you really don't have to do that.' What would the response be?," Gruenberg said.

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