

This checklist can help you decide if an attorney is a good fit for you. You don't need to ask every question or use every item below. Stick with what feels helpful for you. It is okay to consult with multiple attorneys before choosing one.

As you look for a lawyer, be mindful that some laws have time limits on when you can file a case. Make sure you understand any deadlines that apply.

1. Experience + Knowledge

- Do they have experience handling cases like yours?
- Have they represented LGBTQ+ people or people living with HIV?
- Are they familiar with federal, state, and local laws, regulations, or policies that affect people differently based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or HIV status?

2. Respect + Comfort

- Do you feel listened to and treated with respect?
- Did the attorney ask or use your correct pronouns?
- Do you feel comfortable sharing sensitive personal information with them?

3. Privacy + Risk Awareness

- Do they understand risks that come with sharing information on sexual orientation, gender identity, or HIV status?
- Do they take confidentiality seriously?
- Are they aware of common arguments or bias you may face as an LGBTQ+ person or a person living with HIV?

4. Legal Strategy + Your Role

- Did the attorney explain all your legal options in a way you understand?
- Are they upfront about risks, benefits, chances of success, and timelines? Did they explain what will be required of you?
- Will they consult you on major case decisions? Who will have the final say?

5. Communication + Support

- How will they stay in touch with you, and how often?
- Who will work on your case day-to-day? Can you meet them?
- Are they open to consulting with other lawyers or knowledgeable LGBTQ+ or HIV rights groups if helpful?

6. Fees + Costs

- Are fees and costs explained clearly and in writing? Do they accept contingency fees, meaning they keep a percentage of any money you might get through the case?
- Do you understand billing rates, timelines, retainers, and payment expectations?
- Did the attorney discuss all possible types of costs?



Trust your instincts! A good attorney-client relationship should include respect, clear communication, honest advice, and informed decision-making.

This resource is for general information only. It is not legal advice and does not recommend or endorse any attorney. For advice about your specific situation, consult a licensed attorney in your state.

Updated 6/10/26

