

Arizona Judges Told They Must Perform Same-Sex Marriages If They Do Any Weddings

A recent ruling in Arizona may have set a frightening precedent, as judges there were ordered to perform same-sex weddings if they do any weddings at all—regardless of whether doing so violates their faith.

According to a report last week by the *Associated Press*, a recently issued opinion by a state judiciary ethics advisory committee in Arizona says “turning away same-sex couples would violate a state judicial-conduct rule against bias or prejudice based on sexual orientation.”

Therefore, judges must perform same-sex weddings, even if their morals and beliefs contradict the practice. The opinion also said that “a judge’s religious or other personal beliefs don’t make a difference nor does it matter if the judge performs weddings at non-court locations.”

American Family Association (AFA) says the ruling could have devastating effects on the American judicial system and the types of judges who are drawn to the bench.

“This is a scary idea to contemplate,” said AFA President Tim Wildmon. “If judges are forced by this edict to choose between their faith and performing marriage ceremonies, what will they be asked to do next? Will we increasingly see only secular judges on the bench, with fewer and fewer judges who uphold natural law issuing rulings regarding law? Decisions like this amount to a litmus test for judges, as this opinion effectively says that Christian judges are prohibited from performing marriages if they wish to abide by their faith. The fact that the opinion blatantly says that religious beliefs don’t make a difference is frightening, indeed. This is an

attempt to limit the pool of judges to secular judges who are in favor of normalizing homosexuality, and this will have far-reaching effects in judicial rulings.”

A court ruling last October made same-sex marriage legal in Arizona. The judicial ethics advisory committee is appointed by the state Supreme Court and consists of seven judges and two attorneys who aren't judges. Their names are kept confidential.