

# Polygamy & Bigamy Defense Lawyer, Salt Lake City, Utah

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Some people view multiple marriages as a way of life sanctioned by their freedom as consenting adults. So, why is polygamy illegal? Because other people perceive polygamy (bigamy) as a threat to society's traditional family norms. Compared to other states, polygamy in Utah is not uncommon. Polygamy is a crime in all 50 states. The crime between consenting adults is not often prosecuted. However, it remains a serious offense that carries severe punishments for people convicted.

**If you have been charged with polygamy in Utah, you need an experienced defense lawyer to protect your rights and build the most effective defense in your case. Wasatch Defense Lawyers, Salt Lake City Utah at (801) 980-9965 for help as soon as possible.**

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[Call Now!](#)

## Utah Polygamy Law

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Polygamy (bigamy) is defined under Utah Code 76-7-101 as having multiple marriages simultaneously, or marrying or cohabitating with a person while knowing that that person is married to someone else. Is polygamy legal in Utah or other states?

The Edmunds Act enacted in the mid-1800s made polygamy a federal crime, but that law was repealed in the latter part of that century. Still, through the generations, the Supreme Court has declared polygamy illegal in the United States. But, both the Utah state code and federal law against Polygamy has been modified over time. For example:

- In 2013, a federal judge's ruling struck down some parts of [Utah bigamy law](#) that prohibit cohabitation of polygamous couples but maintained the law against having multiple marriage licenses.
- In 2020, the Utah legislature decriminalized polygamy among consenting adults, reducing the crime from a third-degree felony, punishable by a prison sentence, to an infraction similar in penalties to a traffic offense.

## Utah Bigamy Penalty

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Due to the 2020 change to [polygamy laws in Utah](#), the now minor offense of polygamy carries a sentence to community service and a maximum fine of \$750. (That's reduced from the long-standing third-degree felony classification for polygamy in Utah, which has carried a sentence of up to five years prison time and a \$5,000 fine.)

However, if a new spouse has not entered into the marriage or cohabitation voluntarily, i.e., if it involved threats, force, [abuse](#), or fraud, polygamy is still a felony crime. A second-degree felony in Utah can carry a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison and a fine of up to \$10,000.

## Defenses Against Polygamy Charges

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These, among other legal arguments, can be used in defense against polygamy charges:

*Unaware:* To be guilty of the crime of polygamy in Utah, the defendant must have entered the illegal marriage or cohabitation knowing that the person he or she was marrying was already married to someone else. Being unaware of the person's relationship status can be a viable defense.

*Fearful:* If a person can show sufficient evidence that she got away from the marriage or cohabitation because she feared being coerced or incurring bodily injury, she has an effective defense against polygamy charges.

## Polygamy Resources

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*Utah Code 76-7-101:* Use this link to access the current [Utah polygamy laws](#).

*Holding out Help:* Use this link to access support for people who need [help to leave the polygamist subculture](#).

## Polygamy Defense Attorney, Salt Lake City Utah

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If you have been charged with the crime of polygamy (bigamy) in Utah, you need a defense lawyer who is highly knowledgeable in the legal nuances of this type of case. [Wasatch lawyers](#) have many years of combined experience to build the best possible defense for you.

If you are facing bigamy or polygamy charges, call Wasatch Defense Lawyers at (801) 980-9965 for a free review of your case and to discuss your options for defense.

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