

Shield Law Challenges

The interstate conflict over abortion and gender-affirming care has escalated as states and private actors have brought civil actions and criminal proceedings against health care providers for offering care across state lines. These legal actions may test [shield laws](#)—the protections for health care providers, patients, and those supporting reproductive and gender-affirming health care in states where that care is legal against the reach of states with civil, criminal, and professional consequences related to that care.

This resource collects and describes the legal actions in which shield laws have been or are likely to be used to protect people providing, receiving, and supporting reproductive and gender-affirming health care. This resource includes:

- 2 state criminal proceedings
- 4 state civil actions or investigations
- 2 federal civil actions
- 1 request to the U.S. Supreme Court to exercise original jurisdiction over a case

This resource was last updated in October 2026.

Louisiana, et al. v. New York, et al.

No. 220165, U.S. Supreme Court (filed Sept. 30, 2026)

Type of Challenge: Motion to File Bill of Complaint (a request for the U.S. Supreme Court to exercise original jurisdiction and hear a case in the first instance)

Summary: Louisiana, Alabama, and Arkansas (Plaintiff States) filed [a motion](#) asking the U.S. Supreme Court to consider their case challenging the shield laws enacted by [New York](#), [Massachusetts](#), and [California](#). The Plaintiff States claim the shield laws have undermined their anti-abortion laws and are unconstitutional under the Full Faith and Credit Clause, the equal sovereignty doctrine, federal public nuisance law, and the Dormant Commerce Clause. The Plaintiff States have requested that the Supreme Court exercise original jurisdiction to consider the case in the first instance. The Supreme Court has discretion over whether it hears the case.

Status: New York, Massachusetts, and California must file their response within 60 days of Plaintiff States' September 30, 2026 filing. The Supreme Court will then decide whether to take the case.

Louisiana, et al. v. Nouhavandi, et al.

Case No. 26-cv-03836, U.S. Dist. Ct. W.D. La. (filed Sept. 30, 2026)

Type of Challenge: Federal civil case

Summary: The Attorneys General of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Alabama sued 30 telehealth medication abortion providers and organizations, claiming they advertised, prescribed, and mailing medication abortion from shield law states to individuals in their states in violation of federal public nuisance law, and state consumer protection laws. Plaintiffs seek penalties, damages, and a court order enjoining the providers and organizations from advertising, prescribing, and mailing medication abortion to people in their states.

Status: The case is pending in federal district court in Louisiana.

Texas v. Aid Access, et al.

Cause No. 26-CV-0349, Tex. Dist. Ct., Galveston County (filed Feb. 24, 2026)

Type of Challenge: State civil case

Summary: Texas [sued](#) California-based health care provider Dr. Remy Coeytaux, Netherlands-based abortion telemedicine organization Aid Access, and Aid Access's founder Dr. Rebecca Gomperts, claiming that all have advertised, prescribed, and mailed medication abortion to individuals in Texas in violation of Texas's abortion ban and prohibition on practice of medicine without a Texas license. Texas has requested an order enjoining all defendants from providing abortions and practicing without a state license in violation of Texas law. [California's shield law](#) offers protections against civil liability for providing abortion, including by telehealth.

Status: The case is pending in Texas state district court. In May 2026, Dr. Coeytaux answered the complaint, denying all allegations. In June 2026, Texas filed [an amended petition and application for injunctive relief](#), adding a demand for civil penalties.

Texas v. Lynch, et al.

Cause No. 26DCCV0146, Tex. Dist. Ct., Jefferson County (filed Jan. 27, 2026)

Type of Challenge: State civil case

Summary: In January 2026, Texas [sued](#) Delaware-based health care provider Debra Lynch and her telemedicine practice and company Her Safe Harbor and Delaware Community Health, claiming Nurse Practitioner Lynch violated Texas's abortion ban and practiced medicine without a Texas license by providing medication abortion to patients in Texas through telehealth. Texas has requested an order temporarily and permanently enjoining N.P. Lynch from providing abortions and

practicing without a state license in violation of Texas law. [Delaware's shield law](#) offers protections against civil liability for providing or assisting in abortion.

Status: The case is pending in Texas state district court.

Louisiana v. Coeytaux

No. 0028F2026, La. Dist. Ct., St. Tammany (filed Jan. 1, 2026)

Type of Challenge: State criminal proceedings

Summary: In January 2026, a Louisiana state grand jury [indicted](#) a California-based health care provider, Dr. Remy Coeytaux, on criminal charges related to providing medication abortion to a patient in Louisiana in violation of Louisiana's abortion ban. Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry [stated](#) he would sign an order requesting Dr. Coeytaux's extradition.

Status: California Governor Gavin Newsom [denied](#) the extradition request, consistent with the Governor's prior commitment through a [California shield law](#), issued by executive order, not to surrender any person charged with a criminal violation of another state's law involving provision, receipt, or assistance with reproductive health care.

Rodriguez v. Coeytaux

Case No. 25-cv-00225, U.S. Dist. Ct. S.D. Tex. (filed July 20, 2025, amended Feb. 1, 2026); Case No. 3:26-00207, U.S. Dist. Ct. S.D. Tex (filed June 30, 2026)

Type of Challenge: Federal civil case

Summary: A Texas man, Jerry Rodriguez, represented by anti-abortion lawyer Jonathan Mitchell, brought a [federal case](#) against a California-based health care provider Dr. Remy Coeytaux, alleging Dr. Coeytaux provided medication abortion through telehealth to Rodriguez's ex-partner in Texas. Rodriguez brought claims under Texas's House Bill 7 (HB7)—which provides a private action against someone for manufacturing, distributing, or providing medication abortion in Texas—and Texas's wrongful death law. The lawsuit also directly challenged a [California shield law](#) that allows people to bring a lawsuit in California against someone who engages in "abusive litigation"—a legal action to punish someone for health care activity protected in California.

Status: In April 2026, Dr. Coeytaux filed a motion to dismiss, arguing Rodriguez's claim under HB7 was barred by his prior family-violence conviction, among other deficiencies. On June 30, 2026, Rodriguez filed a notice of dismissal of his action against Dr. Coeytaux. That same day, Rodriguez [filed](#) another substantially similar lawsuit against Dr. Coeytaux adding his daughter, whom he shares with a different partner, as an additional plaintiff in an apparent attempt to avoid HB7's statutory bar against plaintiffs with family-violence convictions. That case is now pending in

federal district court in Texas.

Louisiana v. Carpenter

No. 250187, La. Dist. Ct., West Baton Rouge (filed Jan. 31, 2025)

Type of Challenge: State criminal proceedings

Summary: In January 2025, a Louisiana state grand jury [indicted](#) a New York-based health care provider, Dr. Maggie Carpenter, on criminal charges related to providing medication abortion to a patient in Louisiana in violation of Louisiana’s abortion ban. Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry signed [an order](#) requesting Dr. Carpenter’s extradition.

Status: On February 13, 2025, New York Governor Kathy Hochul [rejected](#) Louisiana’s extradition request, consistent with [New York’s shield law](#), which prohibits the governor from recognizing demands for extradition based on the provision, receipt, assistance, or material support for legally protected reproductive health activity.

Texas v. Carpenter

Cause No. 471-08943-2024, Tex. Dist. Ct., Collin County (filed Dec. 12, 2024)

Type of Challenge: State civil case

Summary: On December 12, 2024, Texas filed [a lawsuit](#) in Texas state court against a New York-based health care provider, Dr. Maggie Carpenter, claiming Dr. Carpenter violated Texas law by providing abortion care through telehealth to a patient in Texas. Because Dr. Carpenter did not respond to the complaint, the Texas court issued a [default judgment](#) on February 13, 2025, enjoining Dr. Carpenter from prescribing medication abortion to patients in Texas and imposing \$100,000 in penalties. When Texas tried to enforce the default judgment in New York in March 2025, the county clerk rejected the request, citing [New York’s shield law](#) prohibiting state and local government employees from using time, resources, equipment, or personnel in furtherance of an investigation or proceeding that seeks to impose liability on a person for legally protected health activity. In July 2025, Texas filed a petition in New York state court to compel the clerk to enforce the Texas court’s default judgment (*Texas v. Bruck*, Case No. EF2025-2536, N.Y. Sup. Ct.).

Status: On October 31, 2025, the [New York state court upheld](#) the clerk’s refusal to process Texas’s request to enforce its state court’s default judgment based on New York’s shield law, reasoning that New York’s shield law “was intended to provide a broad, prophylactic package of laws to protect New York medical providers offering reproductive healthcare telehealth services to out-of-state patients,” and the alleged provision of care was “the precise type of conduct” the shield law was designed to protect. In May 2026, Texas [appealed](#) the lower court’s decision granting the clerk’s motion to dismiss.

Seattle Children's Hospital v. Office of the Attorney General of the State of Texas

Cause No. D-1-GN-23-008855, Tex. Dist. Ct., Travis County (filed Dec. 7, 2023)

Type of Challenge: State civil investigation

Summary: In November 2023, Texas issued a civil investigative demand to Seattle Children's Hospital requesting information related to the Hospital's provision of gender-affirming care to Texas residents. On December 7, 2023, the Hospital filed a [special appearance and petition](#) in Texas state court challenging the Texas AG's request based on jurisdictional issues, HIPAA, and a [Washington shield law](#) protection prohibiting Washington-based entities that provide electronic communication services from responding to requests that relate to an investigation asserting liability for protected health care.

Status: In April 2024, the [matter settled](#) by Texas withdrawing its request and the Hospital agreeing not to do business in Texas.