

Federal Appeal Court Orders Nationwide In-Person Dispensing Restriction on Mifepristone Despite Telehealth's Conclusive Safety

A federal appeals court [has issued](#) a ruling granting the state of Louisiana's request to reinstate a nationwide requirement that mifepristone be dispensed in person at clinics, medical offices, or hospitals, rather than in pharmacies or by mail. This ruling is expected to be appealed, is likely to be considered by the U.S. Supreme Court quickly, and its ultimate impact will depend on whether the Supreme Court allows it to stand. If the Supreme Court upholds the Fifth Circuit's decision, it [would](#) significantly disrupt how many patients access abortion and miscarriage care across the country in abortion states as well as abortion access states.

Currently, [a quarter of abortions across the country](#) are provided by telehealth. The Fifth Circuit's ruling ignores [mountains of scientific evidence](#) proving conclusively mifepristone's safety, including when provided by telehealth, and raises concerns about increased barriers for patients who already face challenges accessing care, including those in rural areas or with limited resources. Further legal developments are expected, and the full implications for access remain uncertain.

For information on the current status of litigation and federal administrative actions that could shape regulation of and access to mifepristone, visit our constantly-updated [Mifepristone Litigation and Federal Action Tracker](#). If you or your organization needs legal support or advice reach out to CRHLP's [SoCal LARJ](#), a pro bono legal network that helps connect health care providers, patients, and advocacy organizations advancing reproductive rights and justice with skilled pro bono counsel.



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Policy News



Photo credit: PBS News

A new [study](#) published in the American Journal of Public Health finds that abortion bans may be associated with increases in deaths during or within one year of pregnancy, highlighting potential public health consequences of post-2022 policy changes. Analyzing national data from 2016 to 2023 across states that enacted complete or six-week bans, researchers from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health estimated a 9.2% rise in pregnancy-associated mortality, equivalent to roughly 68 additional deaths, while noting similar but less precise trends in pregnancy-related mortality and no measurable change in maternal mortality. The authors emphasize that these findings are highly uncertain due to data limitations, the rarity of such deaths, and confounding factors like the COVID-19 pandemic, but suggest that abortion bans may contribute to preventable deaths through increased births, reduced access to care, and disproportionate impacts on higher-risk populations.

Legal News



Photo credit: Capital-Star photo

In a watershed decision, a Pennsylvania appellate court [has ruled](#) that the state constitution protects a right to reproductive autonomy, striking down a decades-old Medicaid ban on state funding for abortion. This marks a [significant expansion](#) of abortion protections under state law. In addition to recognizing abortion as a constitutionally protected fundamental right, the court held that the abortion coverage exclusion discriminated against pregnant people, a form of sex-discrimination the ERA plainly prohibits. The decision builds on the [earlier state supreme court ruling](#) in the same litigation, which had overturned a 1985 case upholding the same Medicaid restriction under the [widely discredited rationale](#) that discrimination against pregnancy-related decisions and health care are not sex discrimination. While an appeal is possible, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services did not defend the constitutionality of the exclusion in court and Governor Josh Shapiro has [publicly](#) expressed support for ending the decades long discriminatory law as one that harms the most economically vulnerable women in Pennsylvania.



Photo credit: Medill Reports

The United States Supreme Court [has issued](#) a unanimous procedural ruling allowing an anti abortion center (AAC, also known as crisis pregnancy centers)) to challenge a state subpoena in federal court. The case arose from a subpoena seeking, among other things, donor information, as part of a larger inquiry into potentially harmful misleading practices by the AAC. The Court concluded that the AAC showed a sufficient injury to First Amendment associational rights to be allowed to challenge the subpoena because demands to disclose who donates to organizations engaged in advocacy can chill donors from supporting them even when the information is provided only to the government and not the public.

The Court drew comparisons to prior civil rights precedent protecting donor anonymity to organizations across a wide ideological spectrum, underscoring constitutional concerns with compelled disclosure of donor information. The decision was notable in allowing the AAC to proceed directly in federal court, rather than letting the state court first decide whether or not the subpoena could be enforced. While the ruling does not resolve the investigation, it may inform and constrain how states pursue similar consumer protection inquiries against AACs, even as the [broader](#) concerns about the legality of AAC practices related to patient privacy and whether they trick people into believing they are receiving medical care from medical professionals and spread inaccurate information about abortion and contraception, remain unresolved.



With so much going on in the world of reproductive health, law, and policy, every week we'll share articles, books, and media you might have missed.

[Abortion Clinics Are Closing Nationwide. Could Urgent Care Help Fill The Gap?](#)

[Trump Wants Data On California's Trans And Abortion Care. Can The State Stop Him?](#)

[Trump Is Going After Birth Control. Here's Why.](#)

[The Terrifying Convergence Of Fetal Personhood Laws And Abortion Bans](#)



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