

# Attorney General Raoul Issues Guidance On Reproductive Rights In Illinois

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CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul today released new guidance to ensure that the public and members of law enforcement understand Illinois' legal protections for abortions.

Attorney General Raoul's office released [“Know Your Reproductive Rights,”](#) a free online resource to ensure that the members of the public understand their rights. The guidance explains that Illinois law protects the right to have an abortion and treats abortion like other kinds of health care. The Attorney General also issued a [letter to law enforcement](#) to clarify that Illinois law does not criminalize abortion.

“It is important for women to know that, regardless of whether federal protection for reproductive health care continues, Illinois law protects their rights,” Raoul said. “As a number of neighboring states enact draconian laws to restrict or eliminate reproductive freedom, Illinois is a proud reproductive health care oasis that will not infringe upon a woman's right to make highly-personal abortion and reproductive health decisions. I encourage women to access the guidance available on our website to ensure they understand the protections under Illinois law.”

Raoul's "Know Your Reproductive Rights" is now available on the Attorney General's website. While not intended to serve as a substitute to medical advice from a health care provider, Raoul's guidance provides answers to common questions related to reproductive rights in Illinois. In short, Illinois law protects the right to access safe abortion services even if the U.S. Supreme Court overturns *Roe v. Wade*. Abortion rights in Illinois include:

- The right to an abortion regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, race, ethnicity, disability status or other protected characteristic.
- No set time limit on abortions. Patients should talk with their health care providers about their individual circumstances to decide what treatment options are best for them.
- Health care, including abortion and other reproductive care, for residents of other states.
- The right to an abortion for individuals under the age of 18.

In addition to clarifying the law for Illinois residents, Raoul's office issued a letter to law enforcement throughout the state explaining that Illinois law does not allow the prosecution of pregnant women for terminating their pregnancies. The letter further clarifies that Illinois law also prohibits law enforcement from interfering with individuals' exercise of their fundamental right to use or refuse reproductive health care.

Illinois law has long recognized the right to privacy and abortion rights. In 2019, Illinois enacted the Reproductive Health Act, supported by the Attorney General's office, to further strengthen legal protections for individuals making decisions about their reproductive health. Last year, the General Assembly further removed restrictions on reproductive health care by repealing the Parental Notice of Abortion Act. The repeal of that law, which required providers to provide advance notification to a minor's guardians prior to performing abortions, goes into effect today, June 1.

In April, the public leak of a draft opinion by the U.S. Supreme Court regarding *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* created confusion nationwide about whether abortion would be prohibited under state laws. Many states, including states neighboring Illinois, have abortion bans that predated the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade*. Illinois is not a state with one of these so-called "trigger" laws; however, laws criminalizing abortion as soon as *Roe v. Wade* is overturned impact states such as Illinois. In 2020 alone, the Illinois Department of Public Health estimates that nearly 10,000 women came to Illinois to have an abortion – a 29% increase over the prior year. The guidance issued today explains that, even if the U.S. Supreme Court overturns *Roe v. Wade* this summer, Illinois law will still protect the right to an abortion.