



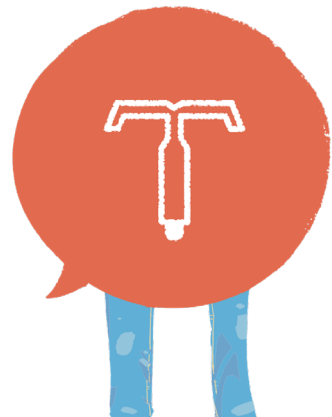
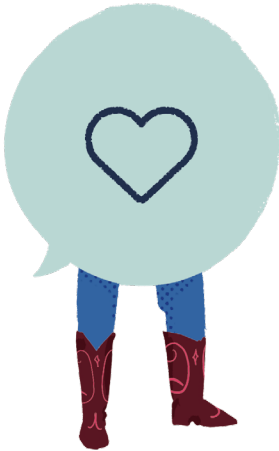
Abortion Access Guide

A resource to help patients
access abortion care in
Washington State



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Introduction

As patients continue to feel the impact over the loss of the federal right to abortion, it is more important than ever to understand where to receive abortion care in your community, how to navigate health care systems, and what to know about your legal rights as a patient.

Abortion is legal in Washington, yet many patients seeking reproductive care face numerous obstacles. These include barriers like medical costs, harassment and discrimination within health centers, transportation and childcare challenges, lack of in-language services, and more.

A Note on Language

This guide highlights and affirms that transgender men and nonbinary patients have abortions and are often underrepresented in conversations about abortion and reproductive health.

Pro-Choice Washington uses gender neutral language when referring to abortion patients whenever possible. That said, language about women may appear when referring to specific women or citing research where only women were surveyed.

Acknowledgments

This guide is a culmination of years long work by our Pro-Choice Washington staff and fellows, including Madeline Ellis, Kimberly Daw, and Clareta Tsang. Special thanks to our early readers who provided feedback and insight into abortion experiences and patient care.

Where Can You Get an Abortion in Washington State?



Primary Care Clinics

Washington state law allows healthcare providers who are trained in abortion care to perform abortions.

This means you may be able to access early abortion services at your primary care facility without having to visit a separate clinic or see a different provider.

To learn more about how abortion care can be a part of your primary care visit, use the QR code below.



Reproductive Health Clinics

Washington state has 46 clinics that provide abortion care.

The Department of Health (DOH) helps fund 34 of these clinics to provide sexual and reproductive health care services on a sliding fee scale or for free for patients who qualify.

To find clinic locations near you, use the QR code below.





Hospitals

Public hospitals that provide maternity benefits are required by Washington state law (RCW 9.02.160) to provide equivalent services for abortion.

In cases of medical emergencies that require an abortion, you have the right to receive care at any hospital. Any hospital that cannot provide a necessary abortion when you arrive for care must refer you to a facility that can.

To learn more about your rights under the **Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA)** use the QR code below.



Telehealth

Telehealth is a safe, secure, and private way to access medication abortion, and other reproductive services, without having to visit a clinic.

Telehealth appointments can take place online, through video calls, or as audio-only calls.

Medication abortion, as well as other sexual and reproductive health services, can be accessed through telehealth.

Use the QR code below to learn more about how to access medication abortion through telehealth.



What is the Typical Abortion Timeline?

As a patient, you decide how and when you need abortion care on your own terms.

Here are the typical steps in an abortion journey, though they may vary by patient.

If you think you are pregnant, take an at-home pregnancy test to confirm your pregnancy. You can also schedule an appointment with a provider to confirm your pregnancy and the gestational age (how far along you are).

Making your pregnancy decision is up to you, and everyone is different. Use the QR code to learn more about abortion.




1. Confirm Your Pregnancy

2. Understand Your Options

3. Make Your Decision

Once you have confirmed your pregnancy, several options are available: parenting, adoption or abortion (termination). Take your time to consider them all.



For a medication abortion, plan for the appointment to last around one hour. Afterwards, you can decide when to take the two-drug combination (mifepristone first; then misoprostol).

For a procedural abortion, plan to be in the clinic all day. The actual procedure takes less than 20 minutes. Your provider will discuss pain management options with you.

4. Make Your Abortion Appointment

Your provider will help you schedule additional appointments depending on the type of abortion you need - medication or a procedural (in-clinic) abortion.

5. Your Appointment Day

6. Your Aftercare

Cramping and some bleeding are common symptoms after your abortion. Your clinic may be able to provide you with over-the-counter pain medication. See the Resources page if you need additional support, such as doula care.

Types of Abortion

There are two main types of abortion: medication abortion and procedural abortion.

Medication Abortion

Medication abortion, or the abortion pill, uses medication to end a pregnancy and can be safely taken at home. In general, clinics or online services typically provide medication abortions before or until about 11 weeks of pregnancy.

A medication abortion usually includes taking two kinds of drugs for a two-step regimen. In some instances, Mifepristone may not be available. A one-drug regimen with just Misoprostol can be used instead.



1 Mifepristone blocks a hormone necessary for a pregnancy to continue to develop. Although uncommon, some people will experience vaginal bleeding.



2 Misoprostol causes cramping and bleeding from the vagina so that the pregnancy will leave your body. It's usually taken within 72 hours after taking the first pill.



Use the QR code to the left to learn more about medication abortion.

Procedural Abortion

Procedural (in-clinic) abortion occurs in a medical setting, and can be performed by advanced registered nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, physicians or physician assistants trained in abortion care. Clinicians that provide procedural abortions may have distinct gestational age limits (usually around 24-26 weeks). Confirm this with your chosen provider in advance.

Overall, procedural abortion is more invasive than medication abortion. There are two main types of procedural abortions available. Your provider can help determine which kind is best for you based on your individual medical needs, as well as options for pain management during and after your procedure.



Vacuum aspiration uses gentle suction to empty your uterus. It's usually used until about 14-16 weeks after your last period.

Dilation and Evacuation (D&E) uses a combination of suction and medical tools to empty your uterus. You can get a D&E after 16 weeks since your last period.



Use the QR code to the left to learn more about procedural abortion.

How Much Will Your Abortion Cost?

Abortion can vary in price depending on a few factors including the type of abortion you receive, how far along you are in the pregnancy, your insurance, as well as what individual providers charge.

In 2021, the average cost of abortion care, in states along the West Coast, was between \$650 and \$926.

In 2021, the Median Cost of Abortion Services Exceeded \$500

In out-of-pocket costs for patients who self-pay

Medication abortion First trimester procedural abortion Second trimester procedural abortion

United States



Northeast



Midwest



South



West



Source: Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH), University of California San Francisco. Trends in Abortion Care in the United States, 2017-2021.

It's important to keep in mind that these costs may be lower or higher depending on your situation. Procedural abortions after 20 weeks will cost more than abortions earlier in pregnancy. These average costs also don't include the cost of travel, childcare, or lost wages from taking time off work.

Paying for your abortion care can be stressful. But you don't have to do it alone. **Here are some financial options that can help cover the costs for your abortion care.**

Private Insurance

Washington state regulated health plans are required to cover abortion care if they cover maternity and prenatal care. As of 2024, these plans should not charge a co-pay for abortion.

State Programs

Washington Apple Health (Medicaid) pays for most health care services, including abortion, abortion after-care (up to 12 months), and post-abortion contraception. Depending on your income, you could qualify for this free health coverage.

Local Abortion Funds

The Northwest Abortion Access Fund (NWAAF) is an abortion fund serving Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska. They send funds directly to the clinic and can also assist with travel costs.

Out-of-Pocket

You can pay out-of-pocket for your abortion using cash or credit. Many clinics also offer sliding fee scales based on your income. This is the most private option to pay for abortion services.

If you need your payment to stay private using any of these options, talk with the staff at the clinic where you receive your abortion. They can help you maintain confidentiality.

What to Know About Your Legal Rights as a Patient



Out of State

You can come from anywhere outside of Washington to receive abortion services.

If you travel to Washington for abortion care and encounter law enforcement of any kind, **you do not have to tell them about your abortion.**

If you reside in a state where abortion is banned, **Washington's Shield Law** prohibits Washington law enforcement and courts from helping other states prosecute providers and patients for abortion care that is legal in Washington. See the Resources section in the full guide for more details.



For more legal support, visit **Repro Legal Hotline** using the QR code or call **844-868-2812.**

Abortion is legal and protected in Washington. Anyone, of any age, can access an abortion for any reason before viability of the fetus (when it can live outside your body). You don't have to live in-state or be a US citizen, and you don't need permission from anyone to access an abortion.



Data Privacy

The **My Health My Data Act** prohibits the selling of personal health information without your consent on apps, websites, and the dark web.

Learn how to protect your digital privacy here:



Protestors

Washington law (**RCW 9A.50.020**) prevents anyone from stopping or blocking you from receiving medical care, including abortion. If protestors try to stop or threaten you, tell the clinic and document what happened.

Contact **Legal Voice** at **info@legalvoice.org** for help.



How to View the Full Guide

This printed copy is an abridged version of our guide.

The full guide includes more resources to help any patient navigate abortion laws in Washington through real-life inspired stories from patients who sought care.

Each patient story in the full guide includes a Patient Resources page with information and links that you can use to get more help if you find yourself in a similar situation.

To read the patient stories and see the full list of resources, view the guide at **prochoicewashington.org/resources/abortion-access-guide** or use the QR code below.



