

ACLU

Illinois

A Guide to **Reproductive
Health Care Information
& Access** *in Illinois*



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Find an online version of this guide and other resources at www.aclu-il.org/reproguide.

Guiding Principles to Knowing Your Rights and Staying Informed

In this guide, we'll talk about different kinds of reproductive health care information, rights, and decisions you may make. As you read this guide and look for medical care, support, and resources, keep these principles in mind:

Get all the information you need to make the best decision for you

An informed decision is when you have all the information you need or want about the care you are receiving or are going to receive and related risks to make a decision without pressure, force, or coercion. Be sure to do your research, ask questions, or ask for more information from your provider.

Open up a conversation with your provider – share your thoughts, reservations, and disagreements

Medical providers may try to provide care without asking for your permission or without providing information on why that care is needed. Have a conversation with your provider to ask questions, share your thoughts, or talk through disagreements. If you disagree with your medical provider but ultimately decide to take their advice, ask them to document it in your medical file.

Take the time you need

Some medical providers may pressure you into making a decision about your care right away. Do not be afraid to ask for more time to make a decision. If the provider says the decision is time sensitive, ask them to explain why and to document it in your medical file.

Look for support

Find people you trust to provide support as you make decisions about your reproductive care. This could be friends, family members, doulas, or other people you trust.

Contraception

Your right to make informed decisions about your sexual and reproductive health includes deciding to use contraception (commonly referred to as birth control) or not.

Talking with a health care provider about the differences between these methods can help you make an informed decision on the best method for you. Depending on the type, birth control can be used to prevent unintended pregnancy, prevent sexually transmitted infections, and/or manage hormones.

If you decide to use birth control, there are many different types of birth control to choose from.

Some common methods include:

- + internal and external condoms
- + intrauterine devices (IUDs, hormonal and non-hormonal)
- + birth control pills
- + birth control implant
- + birth control patch
- + birth control shot
- + birth control ring

Most insurance companies must cover birth control prescriptions for up to 12 months at one time. If you have a self-insured plan, the 12-month coverage of birth control prescriptions at one time does not apply.

Check with your employer or health insurance company to see what type of plan you have.

More Information:

Contraception rights: www.readjustcoalition.org/public-awareness

Support accessing affordable contraception: <https://ican4all.org/>

Abortion Care

You have the fundamental right in Illinois to decide to have an abortion, which means the government cannot interfere with your choices and decisions.

- + Illinois Medicaid covers abortion care at no cost or low cost (some procedure fees may apply). Ask the clinic what you need to bring or if they can help you determine if you are eligible for Medicaid.
- + Most Illinois based private insurance companies required cover abortion care. See if your plan is included:
www.aclu-il.org/coverage-chart.
- + You can receive abortion care at many family planning clinics and at some doctor's offices and hospitals. Be sure to call the clinic or office to find out what services and supports they may offer. Use the resources below to help you find a family planning clinic near you.
- + Be careful! Fake abortion centers exist. Sometimes, they are listed as crisis pregnancy centers or claim they provide all options counseling and care when they do not. Do not trust an organization that does not talk to you about all your pregnancy options including abortion. Learn more and make sure your clinic provides the full range of health care services at endthelies.com.

***What if I am under 18 and decide to have an abortion?**

Effective June 2022, Illinois repealed a prior law called the Parental Notice of Abortion Act. If you are under 18, a clinic is not required by law to contact a parent or legal guardian if you are seeking abortion care services. Who you tell about your abortion is entirely up to you.

Find more information and resources at: www.aclu-il.org/youthrepro

Resources for Abortion Care

Know Your Rights

Abortions in Illinois
www.aclu-il.org/kyr-abortion

Options Counseling

All-Options
www.all-options.org/ | (888) 493-0092

Find an abortion clinic

National Abortion Federation
<https://prochoice.org/patients/find-a-provider> | (877) 257-0012

Planned Parenthood of Illinois
www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-illinois/locations
(877) 200-PPIL

Paying for your abortion care

Illinois Medicaid Eligibility and Application
<https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/> | (800) 843-6154

Chicago Abortion Fund
www.chicagoabortionfund.org | (312) 663-0338
Serves outside of the Chicagoland area, hotline is open on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 6am-2pm CST.

National Abortion Federation
(800) 772-9100

National Network of Abortion Funds
<https://abortionfunds.org/need-abortion/#funds-list>

Planned Parenthood of Illinois
(877) 200-7745
Must have appointment at a PPIL clinic

Transportation and logistical assistance

Midwest Access Coalition
<https://midwestaccesscoalition.org/> | Call or text: (847) 750-6224

Care During and After Pregnancy (Postpartum)

To make informed decisions about your care during pregnancy and after birth, be sure to ask questions and have conversations with your medical provider to receive all the information you need about the procedures, drugs, tests, and treatments that are offered or available to you.

If you and your medical provider disagree about your care, you can seek a second medical opinion.

If you decide to take their medical advice, ask them for all the medical information on why they disagree with your choice and ask them to document your conversation in your medical file before receiving care.

There are many decisions you may make throughout pregnancy, birth, and after giving birth, like:

- + Choosing your health care provider
 - Example: choosing to have a midwife instead of a physician
- + Accepting or refusing procedures, exams, drugs, tests, or treatment throughout pregnancy, labor and delivery, and after birth
 - Examples: deciding to have an epidural, to receive medication to induce labor, or to be sterilized (i.e. having a tubal ligation, or getting a vasectomy or hysterectomy)
- + Choosing how and where you would like to give birth such as:
 - giving birth at home, in a birth center, or hospital (see page 7 for information and limitations on some birthing options)
 - choosing to have a vaginal birth
 - changing positions during labor and delivery
- + Maintaining uninterrupted contact with your newborn unless the infant or birthing parent needs care that requires separation
 - If you are incarcerated, there may be limitations to the contact you are allowed to have with your infant. See page 10 for resources on pregnant and parenting while incarcerated.
- + Choosing to breast/chest feed
 - If you do decide to breast/chest feed, many hospitals offer lactation support staff if requested
- + Determining the aftercare for yourself and your baby, including refusal of eye drops or other medications for baby or parent

Pregnancy Support and Birthing Information and Resources

Birth Doula

If you would like support throughout pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period, consider hiring or finding a volunteer doula.

What is a doula?

A doula provides emotional and physical comfort and support before, during, and after labor and childbirth. A doula can also provide informational support, pain management techniques and guidance in line with your birth wishes, and can be an advocate when interacting with the hospital staff or other medical professionals.

Choosing a doula who can provide you with culturally relevant support can offer a more positive birth experience with better health outcomes for birthing parents and babies, reducing the risk of unnecessary medical interventions. There are many private and nonprofit options to connect with a doula, and some insurance plans cover doula support as well.

There is more information on doulas and where to find one in the resource section on page 10.

These are only some of the options that are available to you. Be sure to do your research to find a doula near you.

Birthing Options

Deciding where to give birth can be an important decision. In addition to hospitals, birthing centers or home births are options that serve people who have low-risk pregnancies as determined by you and your provider.

A “low risk pregnancy” can mean there are no active complications or other factors that place the pregnancy at increased risk for complications.

To understand if your pregnancy is considered low-risk, have a conversation with your medical provider and get all the information you need to make an informed decision about your birthing options.

See the chart on the next page to learn more about the different birthing options.

When you are making your birth plan, be sure to do your research and talk about your options with your medical provider and trusted support systems (such as family members and/or a doula) to make the best decision for you. Everyone has the right to be listened to, affirmed and supported during their pregnancy, delivery and postpartum time.

Hospital:

Care is provided by an obstetrician-gynecologist (OB-GYN), certified nurse midwife (CNM) or registered nurse

Medical anesthesia (like an epidural) is available

C-sections (cesarean) and other interventions may be performed

May have to share a room

Less able to move around room or hospital

Limited number of people allowed during birth and for visiting

Some hospitals offer lactation support

Birthing Centers:

Birthing centers may be a standalone center or be a separate wing of hospital with a home-like setting

Prenatal, birth and postpartum health care is provided by registered nurses and certified nurse midwives

- OB-GYNs may be consulted or available if needed

Only serves low-risk pregnancies as determined by you and your provider

Typically does not offer medical anesthesia

Natural pain management which may include birth tubs, massage, and other relaxation techniques

Pregnant people can freely move around during labor larger, private rooms

More support people are allowed in the room during the birthing process

Baby typically rooms with the birthing parent

Most birth centers offer lactation support

*There are not many birthing centers in Illinois. Check with your insurance to make sure birthing centers are included in your coverage.

Home Births:

Able to give birth in the comfort of your home

Can have family members, baby's siblings and other support people present

Pregnant people are able to freely move around during labor

Does not offer medical anesthesia

Supports natural pain management

Offers prenatal, birth and postpartum healthcare through your midwife

Only serves low-risk pregnancies as determined by you and your provider

Can only be attended by a certified nurse midwife (CNM) in Illinois

- OB-GYNs may be consulted or available if needed for transfer of care in emergent situations

Is a safe option for low-risk pregnancies

May be covered by some insurance plans

May choose a home birth to reduce medical interventions and related complications

Pregnancy and Postpartum Accommodations

It is illegal for your job to fire or discriminate against you for becoming pregnant and/or for needing accommodations or adjustments during your pregnancy and the postpartum period (after childbirth).

Reasonable accommodations

If you are pregnant or have given birth recently, your employer must provide “reasonable accommodations” unless it causes your employer undue hardship like an accommodation costing more than your employer can afford.

Reasonable accommodations can include:

- + bathroom breaks and breaks for rest or water
- + help with manual labor or lifting items
- + a chair to sit on
- + time off for medical appointments or medical leave

Breast/Chestfeeding

You have the right to breast/chestfeed in any place (public or private) where you and your child are otherwise allowed to

be. This is true whether you choose to be covered while pumping or feeding or not.

You cannot be denied access to a public place (like a restaurant, or library) because you are breast/chestfeeding or because you asked for accommodations to feed or pump.

Reasonable accommodations at work also apply to pumping milk. They can include:

- + break time for pumping (without docking your pay)
- + a private space for pumping that is not a bathroom
- + a space where you can safely store milk

Illinois courthouses and airports are required to provide a private room or area for pumping that includes a chair and an electrical outlet. The private room or area cannot be a restroom or toilet stall.

If you are having trouble getting accommodations from your employer or public entity, contact the ACLU using the information on page 10.

Additional Resources

Doulas:

Doula Training International:

<https://doulatraininginternational.com/find-a-doula/>

Ancient Song Doula Services (virtual services available):

<https://www.ancientsongdoulaservices.com/>

Chicago Volunteer Doulas: <https://www.chicagovolunteerdoulas.org/>

More Information on Reproductive Rights in Illinois:

The Reproductive Health Act FAQ:

<https://www.aclu-il.org/en/campaigns/illinois-reproductive-health-act-faq>

Pregnancy Discrimination in the Workplace:

<https://www.aclu-il.org/campaigns/pregnancy-discrimination-workplace>

Know Your Rights: Reproductive Rights While Incarcerated:

www.aclu-il.org/en/know-your-rights/reproductive-rights-while-incarcerated

Legal Resources:

If you have been denied services or health care because of someone else's religious beliefs, the ACLU of Illinois may be able to help:

<https://action.aclu.org/legal-intake/religious-refusals-complaint-form>

If your civil rights or civil liberties have been violated, please contact the ACLU of Illinois at: <https://action.aclu.org/legal-intake/il-legal-intake>

Community Resources (childcare, counseling, domestic violence/abuse, and more):

Chicagoland: www.chicagoabortionfund.org/chicagoland-resources

Illinois: <https://www.chicagoabortionfund.org/illinois-resources>

Breast/Chestfeeding Resources:

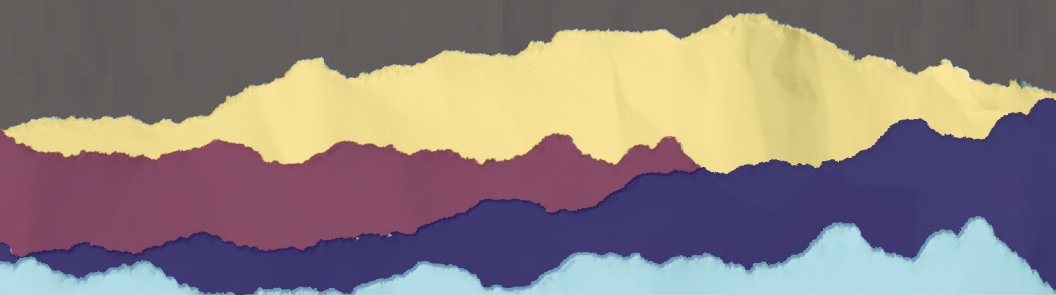
Illinois Public Health Institute:

<https://iphionline.org/breastfeeding-resources-for-moms/>

Breastfeed Chicago: <https://breastfeedchicago.org/>



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