

News From The States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

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By [Elisha Brown](#)



*Of the more than 1 million Americans who had abortions last year, 63% terminated their pregnancies using medication, according to new data. The nation also saw the most abortions since 2012.
(Anna Moneymaker/Getty Images)*

Researchers found that 63% of all abortions provided in the U.S. last year were medication abortions.

There were an estimated **1,026,690 abortions** — the most in over a decade — performed in the formal health care system in 2023, according to a [report](#) released Tuesday by the Guttmacher Institute, a reproductive health research organization.

The data provides a quantitative look at abortion care the first full year after the U.S. Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* ruling in June 2022.

Medication abortions increased by 10% from 2020 to 2023. About 642,700 medication abortions were provided in the country last year, the data shows.

“Improved access to medication abortion is a positive development, but it is not a panacea,” said Rachel Jones, Guttmacher principal research scientist, in a news release. “As abortion restrictions proliferate post-Dobbs, medication abortion may be the most viable option — or the only option — for some people, even if they would have preferred in-person procedural care.”

The findings were published one week before the U.S. Supreme Court is set to hear arguments in a [pivotal lawsuit](#) that could severely limit access to medication abortion.

Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine, an anti-abortion rights group, and other doctors who oppose abortion are asking the court to [restrict](#) access to mifepristone, one of two drugs used to terminate pregnancies. The Biden administration is urging the justices to [maintain](#) the U.S. **Food and Drug Administration’s** current regulations on mifepristone.

“As our latest data emphasize, more than three out of five abortion patients in the United States use medication abortion,” said Amy Friedrich-Karnik, Guttmacher’s director of federal policy.

“Reinstating outdated and medically unnecessary restrictions on the provision of mifepristone would negatively impact people’s lives and decrease abortion access across the country,” Friedrich-Karnik said.

Most states without near-total bans saw upticks in abortions.

Despite the patchwork of abortion laws in the nation — [14 states have near-total bans](#), while Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Nebraska, the Carolinas and Utah restrict abortion after 18 weeks’ gestation or earlier — **Americans terminated pregnancies at the highest number and rate seen in a decade**, according to a [policy analysis](#) by Isaac Maddow-Zimet, a data scientist, and Candace Gibson, director of state policy at Guttmacher.

The rate was 15.7 abortions per 1,000 women of reproductive age last year. **Over 160,000 people traveled out of state in 2023 to seek abortion care**, the report stated.

According to Maddow-Zimet and Gibson, several factors likely contributed to the increase in abortions last year, including the rise of **telehealth**, financial support from abortion funds and [shield laws](#) in 22 states and Washington, D.C. that protect providers and patients from out-of-state investigations concerning reproductive health.

“This increase in abortions does not diminish the impact of Dobbs on people’s lives,” Maddow-Zimet and Gibson wrote. “Instead, the data provide important evidence that people will continue to seek abortion care in spite of the policy barriers that anti-abortion policymakers impose.”

States that share borders with states that enacted bans post-Dobbs saw a 37% increase in abortions between 2020 and 2023. **Illinois** had the highest total surge with 38,010 more abortions than in 2020, a 72% increase over three years. **New Mexico** (15,090 more

abortions, 257% increase) **Virginia** (14,190 more abortions, 76% increase) and **North Carolina** (12,970 more abortions, 41% increase) followed suit.

The Guttmacher Institute classified the following states as border states in the current abortion policy landscape: Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Mexico, Ohio, South Carolina and Virginia.

Almost every state without a near-total ban saw increases in abortion. But Arizona, Georgia, Indiana and Wisconsin all saw declines. Arizona has a 15-week ban, Georgia has a six-week ban, while near-total bans were in effect in Indiana and Wisconsin at certain periods in 2023.

THE BEAT *States Newsroom coverage*

Feds approve Utah's request for postpartum Medicaid expansion



*Utah is extending its postpartum Medicaid and CHIP coverage to 12 months in an effort to address rising maternal mortality rates.
(John Moore/Getty Images)*

Utah families will now have access to Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance (CHIP) postpartum coverage for 12 months, up from six weeks. **About 4,000 women will have access to the coverage**, [Utah News Dispatch](#) reported. "At least one-third of maternal deaths occur in the postpartum period," a spokesperson for the state Department of Health and Human Services said in a statement. "We are thrilled to be able to provide this support and resource for new mothers."

Most states have expanded [Medicaid for new mothers](#) from two months to a year. [Arkansas](#) and [Idaho](#) have not extended coverage. Arkansas' Republican Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders recently said expansion was unnecessary while unveiling a maternal health plan to improve birth outcomes. An Idaho [bill](#) that would expand coverage is advancing in the House.

[Nevada](#) is waiting on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to implement the policy, and similar legislation is pending in [Iowa](#). Wisconsin applied for a [waiver](#) in 2021 to lengthen coverage from 60 days to 90 days, but federal officials have not approved it yet. Democratic Gov. [Tony Evers](#) and reproductive rights advocates are urging Republicans to expand postpartum Medicaid to a year, according to [Wisconsin Examiner](#).

IVF treatments inaccessible to Americans with low income

One round of in vitro fertilization is roughly **\$20,000**, a price that can be prohibitive for many Americans, [KFF Health News](#) reported. Twenty-one states require insurers to cover fertility treatments, according to [Stateline](#), but [Illinois and New York](#) are the only states that cover some procedures for Medicaid patients. "In American health care, they don't want the poor people to reproduce," said Mary Delgado, a New Yorker who sought IVF after receiving an endometriosis diagnosis. Delgado and her partner had to travel more than **300 miles** round trip from New York City to upstate New York for IVF, where a clinic offered less-expensive services and in-house financing.

The cost of her treatments — an IVF cycle, medications, egg retrieval, genetic testing and egg transfer — was **\$14,000**. They paid half of the bill with cash they were saving to buy a home and financed the rest through the clinic. Delgado got pregnant quickly and gave birth to a daughter. She told KFF Health News that she doesn't resent people who have more resources or better insurance, but she wishes infertility procedures were more equitable.

THE PULL *Commentary from Tennessee*

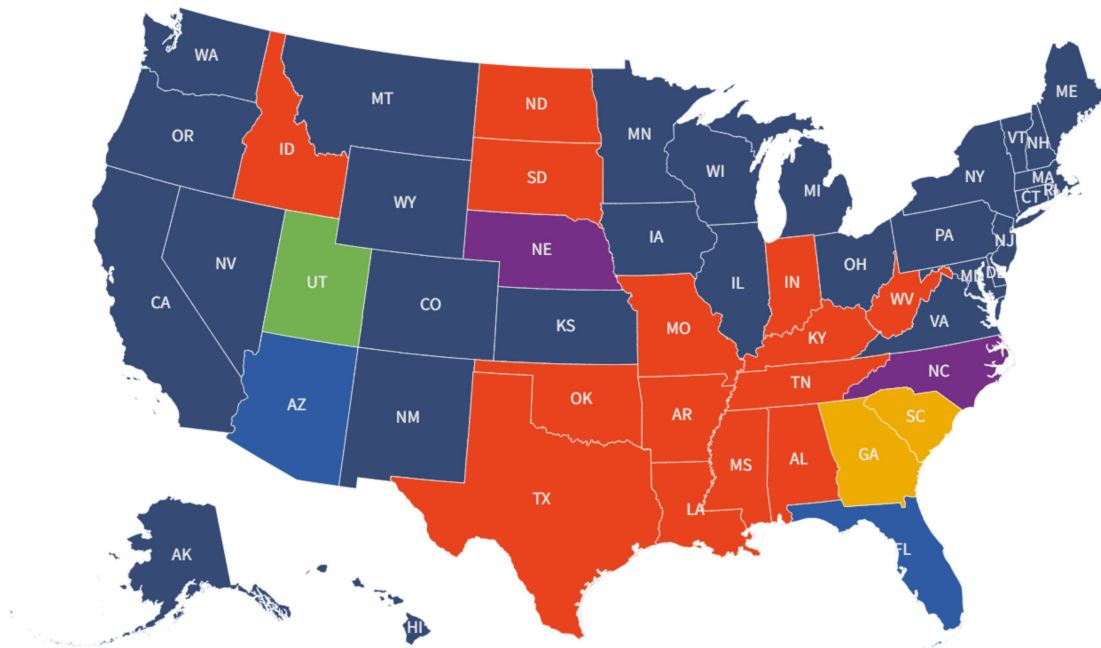
"Although most forms of birth control prevent ovulation and/or fertilization from happening, some do impair implantation of the fertilized egg. That's not an abortion if you define pregnancy in the medically appropriate way — as implantation — but it might become one under a poorly written law — like Tennessee's — that equates fertilization with pregnancy." — **Bruce Barry**, columnist, [Tennessee Lookout](#)

THE PULSE *Reproductive rights news across the country*

- Connecticut lawmakers are weighing a proposed abortion rights constitutional amendment. ([NBC Connecticut](#))

- Anti-abortion rights activists in South Carolina are lobbying for a near-total abortion ban in the state, which already has a six-week ban in place. ([Charleston Post and Courier](#))
- In Washington, D.C., and 19 states where abortion is legal, Medicaid coverage is still banned for most abortions. ([KFF](#))
- The National Air and Space Museum settled a lawsuit with visitors from a Catholic high school who were told to remove their hats emblazoned with anti-abortion messaging. ([CNBC](#))
- Online orders for the first over-the-counter birth control pill began this week. ([CNN](#))

STATE BY STATE *Abortion access in the U.S.*



Open this interactive map in your browser

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