



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE

DIRECTIVE OF THE GOVERNOR

24-12

DATE: June 11, 2024

TO: Department of Health

FROM: Governor Jay Inslee

SUBJECT: Issuing a policy statement regarding emergency abortion care in Washington state

Since the United States Supreme Court terminated the fundamental federal constitutional right to abortion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* in June 2022, Washington state has strengthened its commitment to protecting access to reproductive care, particularly abortion care. The state has enacted groundbreaking legislation, reaffirmed existing legal protections, increased state funding, and adopted strong rules ensuring that people have access to abortion care. These actions provide safety, privacy, and security.

Abortion care is health care. For decades, practicing health care providers and other medical experts have determined abortion care to be the safe and effective standard of care for people who exercise their right to choose or need to end their pregnancy to avoid adverse health outcomes. In these times of uncertainty and misinformation, it is vital for state government to inform and reassure the public that our state law protects their right to access abortion care.

To that end, I hereby direct the Department of Health to issue a policy statement reaffirming and clarifying the requirements under state law for hospitals to provide emergency abortion services. Further, I direct the Department of Health to take enforcement action, in accordance with applicable law, against those hospitals that do not provide such required care.