Summary Report

Refusal to Perform Abortions

Refusal laws, sometimes known as "conscience clauses," allow an individual or facility to refuse to participate in an abortion based on a moral or religious objection to the procedure. State laws vary as to who may refuse to participate in the provision of abortion and whether ancillary abortion services, such as counseling or referral, are included. Currently, nearly every state has a law that allows medical providers, other related personnel, and medical facilities to refuse to participate in the provision of abortion services. Some state refusal laws may also include minimum protections for the patient seeking an abortion, such as notifying the patient of the refusal or providing a referral for alternate care. Learn more at www.lawatlas.org.



Refusal to Provide Abortion Services Allowed

In forty-five states, providers may refuse to provide abortion services to patients.

Jurisdictions: 45 (AL, AK, AR, AZ, CA, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MT, NE, NC, ND, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI, WV, WY)



Medical Provider Refusal – Patient Protections

Two states provide protections for patients whose individual medical provider refuses to perform an abortion. These protections may include notification or referral to an alternate provider.

Jurisdictions: 2 (IL, LA)



Non-Medical Provider Refusal – Patient Protections

Three states provide protections for patients whose non-medical provider refuses to perform an abortion. These protections may include notification (IL, LA, NE), referral to an alternate provider (IL, LA), or a requirement to provide alternate resources to the patient (IL, NE).

Jurisdictions: 3 (IL, LA, NE)