Abortion Waiting Period Requirements

Prepared by the Policy Surveillance Program Staff

ABOUT ABORTION WAITING PERIOD REQUIREMENTS & THE DATA

Abortion waiting period requirements require an individual seeking an abortion to wait a specified time period, usually between 24 to 72 hours, after receiving mandatory counseling before they can obtain the procedures.

Some findings from the dataset include:

- Fifteen jurisdictions have a law that requires the patient to receive an ultrasound prior to obtaining an abortion.
- Seven jurisdictions require a 72-hour waiting period prior to obtaining an abortion.
- Six states require that information on reversing the effects of medication abortion must be communicated to the patient verbally, an increase of four states from December 1, 2018.

NAVIGATING THE DATA

There are two ways to navigate the data by clicking the Filter tab or the Explore tab — for each option, the data can be visualized in a map and table format or in jurisdiction profiles.

Filter

The dataset homepage will default to the Filter tab. Here, users may answer a series of questions to learn more about the characteristics of the laws. Answering more than one question will show all the jurisdictions that meet the combined criteria. Criteria selected will be listed above the questions, and can be removed by clicking the white X or by clicking “Reset” above the questions.

Explore

Users can access Explore by clicking the Explore tab in the bar above the questions. Using Explore, users will see the answers to one question across all jurisdictions.

The primary questions in this dataset are:

1. Is there a law imposing requirements on a patient before they can obtain an abortion (e.g. counseling, waiting period, ultrasound, or heart tone monitoring)?
2. Has the law been limited in whole or in part?
3. Does the state require specific information be provided to the patient before they can consent to an abortion?
4. Must the required information be provided verbally?
5. Does the state require written materials be provided to the patient?
6. Does the law require the patient to receive an ultrasound prior to obtaining an abortion?
7. Must the fetal heart tone be made audible?
8. Does the state require a waiting period prior to obtaining an abortion?
9. Does the law provide any exceptions?

DISPLAYING THE RESULTS

There are two display modes once criteria have been selected by using either the Filter or Explore tab — Map display mode and Profiles display mode.

Map Display
LawAtlas.org dataset homepages default to the map display mode. When querying the data using the Filter tab, all jurisdictions that meet the criteria selected will display in one tone of yellow. Those jurisdictions that do not meet the criteria selected will be colored gray. When querying the data using the Explore tab, the map will illuminate with colors from yellow to red that are associated with the various answer choices (the color-coding is defined by the key to the left of the map).

Below the map, a table will appear. Using the Filter or Explore tab to navigate the questions will change the display:

- Using the Filter tab, you can select an unlimited number of criteria and the applicable jurisdictions that meet the combined criteria will be displayed in the table below.
- Using the Explore tab, you can isolate a single criterion and the applicable jurisdictions will appear in the table below.

Profiles Display
The Profiles display presents the results of the criteria selected in a text-based format for each applicable jurisdiction. Using the Filter tab, jurisdictions that meet the criteria selected will display. Using the Explore tab, jurisdictions that meet the criterion selected will display. If no criteria are selected, the full profiles for each state will appear under both Filter and Explore.

Profile Legend
Within each Profile box, above the questions and answers, there are additional options and information useful in exploring the law:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Toggle Legal Text – Selecting this option will show all the legal text used to answer questions for this jurisdiction.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toggle Full Place Profile – Selecting this option will show all questions and answers for this jurisdiction, regardless of what was selected using the Filter or Explore tabs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toggle Size – Selecting this option will make the profile larger, but will not change the information displayed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Legally Text History – This interactive timeline displays when changes in the law have occurred within a jurisdiction. Using the arrows to the left or right, users may explore how the law has changed over time as new amendments to the law have been enacted. The timeline will change from gray to a shade of yellow when the jurisdiction passed its first relevant law. Each change in the law after that is marked by a break in the timeline.

Map and Profile Legend
There are a few symbols to be aware of in both Map and Profiles display modes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>§</td>
<td>Section Symbol – Clicking this symbol will open a window that displays excerpts from the law that correspond to the question and answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!</td>
<td>Caution Note – Clicking on this symbol will open a small window that displays text that describes important caveats about the question and answer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DATASET RESOURCES
Each dataset homepage includes the following resources available for download:

- **Data**: The Data file exports in CSV format and may contain two tabs. The “Statistical Data” tab contains the legal variables coded in the dataset, displayed as values defined in the accompanying Codebook. The “Summary Data” tab contains the legal variables coded in the dataset in text form, as well as the accompanying citations and any caution notes that may be included. Note: if there is only one tab available for download it will be the “Statistical Data” as described above.

- **Codebook**: The Codebook defines all of the coded variables in the dataset. The Codebook lists the question, question type, variable name, variable value and variable label. The Codebook should be used in conjunction with the Statistical Data extract.

- **Research Protocol**: The Research Protocol is a comprehensive document that outlines the entire methodology of the project, including the scope, inclusion and exclusion criteria, data collection methods, definitions, coding scheme decisions, as well as the quality control process.

- **Summary Report**: The Summary Report provides a snapshot of important findings from the dataset.

CONTACT US TO REPORT AN ISSUE WITH THE DATA
While reasonable efforts have been made to ensure that the information in this resource is complete and accurate, the creators make no guarantee that it is error free; if you encounter
information that you believe is inaccurate, please contact us at RAAP@radprogram.org and lawatlas@temple.edu.

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