

State Laws

Washington

Political Information

Executive (Governor)

Pro-choice

Senate

Pro-choice

House

Pro-choice

Abortion-Care Policies

Abortion Providers

Abortion Providers: Restrictions

Restrictions on Who May Provide Abortion Services

Washington prohibits certain qualified health-care professionals from providing abortion services.

Only a physician licensed by the state may provide a surgical abortion. Wash. Rev. Code Ann. §§ 9.02.110, .120, .170(4) (Enacted 1991).

Abortion Providers: Expanded Access to Non-Surgical Abortion

Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners may furnish or prescribe medication abortion. Wash. Op. Att'y Gen. No. 1 (Jan. 5, 2004).

Abortion Rights

Protections: Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA)

Washington has created additional protections for reproductive rights by adding an affirmative right to choose into its state law. In 1991, Washington voters narrowly passed this law via a ballot initiative, reaffirming the holdings of *Roe v. Wade* in the state.

The initiative was so close that the final results had to wait on the full count of absentee ballots. The ballot initiative also reaffirmed a fundamental right to choose or refuse birth control. This law ensures women's access to pre-viability abortion services and would remain in effect even if *Roe v. Wade* were overturned. *Absentee Ballots Put Washington Abortion Rights Initiative Ahead*, Assoc. Press, Nov. 14, 1991.

"The sovereign people hereby declare that every individual possesses a fundamental right of privacy with respect to personal reproductive decisions. Accordingly, it is the public policy of the

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Code Ann. § 9.02.100 (Enacted by Initiative 1991). Additionally, "[t]he state may not deny or interfere with a woman's right to choose to have an abortion prior to viability of the fetus, or to protect her life or health." Wash. Rev. Code Ann. § 9.02.110 (Enacted by Initiative 1991).

Post-Viability Ban