

## ■ Minors' Access to STI Services

**BACKGROUND:** Over the past 30 years, states have expanded minors' authority to consent to health care, including care related to sexual activity. All 50 states and the District of Columbia allow most minors to consent to testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and many explicitly include testing and treatment of HIV. Many states, however, allow physicians to inform parents that the minor is seeking or receiving STI services when they deem it in the best interests of the minor.

### **HIGHLIGHTS:**

- All 50 states and the District of Columbia explicitly allow minors to consent to STI services, although 11 states require that a minor be of a certain age (generally 12 or 14) before being allowed to consent.
- 31 states explicitly include HIV testing and treatment in the package of STI services to which minors may consent.
- 18 states allow physicians to inform a minor's parents that he or she is seeking or receiving STI services; however, with the exception of 1 state that requires parental notification in the case of a positive HIV test, no state requires that physicians notify parents.



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STATE	MINORS MAY CONSENT TO STI SERVICES	CONSENT TO HIV TESTING AND TREATMENT INCLUDED	PHYSICIAN MAY BUT IS NOT REQUIRED TO INFORM PARENTS
Alabama	12 years	X	X
Alaska	X		
Arizona	X		
Arkansas	X		X
California	12 years	X	
Colorado	X	X*	
Connecticut	X†	X	
Delaware	12 years	X	X
Dist. of Columbia	X		
Florida	X	X	
Georgia	X		X
Hawaii	14 years		X
Idaho	14 years	X	
Illinois	12 years	X	X
Indiana	X		
Iowa	X	X‡	
Kansas	X		X
Kentucky	X	X	X
Louisiana	X		X
Maine	X		X
Maryland	X		X
Massachusetts	X <sup>Ω,Φ</sup>		
Michigan	X	X	X
Minnesota	X		X
Mississippi	X	X <sup>Ψ</sup>	
Missouri	X		X
Montana	X	X	X
Nebraska	X		
Nevada	X	X	
New Hampshire	14 years		
New Jersey	X	13 years	X
New Mexico	X	X <sup>Ψ</sup>	
New York	X	X <sup>Ψ</sup>	
North Carolina	X	X	
North Dakota	14 years	X	
Ohio	X	X <sup>Ψ</sup>	
Oklahoma	X	X	X
Oregon	X	X	
Pennsylvania	X	X	
Rhode Island	X	X	
South Carolina	16 years or mature minor	X	
South Dakota	X		
Tennessee	X	X	
Texas	X	X	X
Utah	X		
Vermont	12 years	X <sup>Ψ</sup>	
Virginia	X	X	
Washington	14 years	X	
West Virginia	X		
Wisconsin	X		
Wyoming	X	X	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50 + DC</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>18</b>

\* Physician may inform parents of minor's decision to consent to HIV/AIDS services if the minor is younger than 16.

† Physician must report a positive test result if the minor is younger than 12.

‡ A parent must be notified of a positive HIV test result.

Ω The state funds a statewide program that gives minors access to STI services.

Φ Parent must be notified if the minor's health or life is at risk.

Ψ Does not include right to consent to HIV/AIDS treatment.

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For information on state legislative and policy activity click on Guttmacher's [Monthly State Update](#) and for state level information and data on reproductive health issues, click on Guttmacher's [State Center](#).

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