

■ Requirements for Ultrasound

BACKGROUND: Over the past decade, several states have moved to make ultrasound part of abortion service provision. Some laws and policies require that a woman seeking an abortion receive information on accessing ultrasound services, while others require that a woman undergo an ultrasound before an abortion. Since routine ultrasound is not considered medically necessary as a component of first-trimester abortion, the requirements appear to be a veiled attempt to personify the fetus and dissuade a woman from obtaining an abortion. Moreover, an ultrasound can add significantly to the cost of the procedure.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- 8 states require verbal counseling or written materials to include information on accessing ultrasound services.
- 14 states regulate the provision of ultrasound by abortion providers.
 - 3 states mandate that an abortion provider perform an ultrasound on each woman seeking an abortion, and require the provider to offer the woman the opportunity to view the image.
 - 2 states require the abortion provider to perform an ultrasound on each woman obtaining an abortion after the first trimester, and to offer the woman the opportunity to view the image.
 - 8 states require that a woman be provided with the opportunity to view an ultrasound image if her provider performs the procedure as part of the preparation for an abortion.
 - 3 states require that a woman be provided with the opportunity to view an ultrasound image.



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125 Maiden Lane
New York, NY 10038
212.248.1111
www.guttmacher.org
info@guttmacher.org

1301 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202.296.4012
www.guttmacher.org
policyworks@guttmacher.org

ULTRASOUND REQUIREMENTS

| STATE | INFORMATION ON ACCESSING ULTRASOUND SERVICES | PROVISION OF ULTRASOUND | | | |
|----------------|--|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| | | Required for Each Abortion; The Provider Must Offer the Woman the Opportunity to View the Image | Required After the First Trimester; The Provider Must Offer the Woman the Opportunity to View the Image | If Performed as Part of Preparation for the Abortion, the Provider Must Offer the Woman the Opportunity to View the Image | Offered by the Provider to the Woman |
| Alabama | | X | | | |
| Arizona | | | X | | |
| Arkansas | | | | X | |
| Florida | | | X | | |
| Georgia | Verbal | | | X | |
| Idaho | | | | X | |
| Indiana | Verbal | | | | |
| Kansas | Written | | | X | |
| Louisiana | | X | | | |
| Michigan | Written* | | | X | |
| Mississippi | | X | | | |
| Nebraska | Verbal and written | | | X [†] | |
| North Dakota | | | | | X [‡] |
| Ohio | | | | X | |
| Oklahoma | Verbal and written | | | | |
| South Carolina | | | | X | |
| South Dakota | | | | | X |
| Utah | Verbal | | | | X |
| Wisconsin | Verbal and written | | | | |
| TOTAL | 8 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 3 |

* Included in written counseling materials although not specifically mandated by state law.

† If an ultrasound is requested by the woman, the provider will also display the image so that the woman can view it.

‡ If performed, an ultrasound must take place 24 hours in advance of the abortion.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Gold RB, [All that's old is new again: the long campaign to persuade women to forego abortion](#), *Guttmacher Policy Review*, 2009, 12(2):19–22.

Gold RB and Nash E, [State abortion counseling policies and the fundamental principles of informed consent](#), *Guttmacher Policy Review*, 2007, 10(4):6–13.

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