

■ 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:

- 7 states require verbal counseling or written materials to include information on accessing ultrasound services.
- 13 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.
 - 7 states require that a woman be provided with the opportunity to view an ultrasound image if her provider performs the test as part of the preparation for an abortion.
 - 2 states require that a woman be provided with the opportunity to view an ultrasound image.



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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			
Ohio				X	
Oklahoma	Verbal and written				
South Carolina				X	
South Dakota					X
Utah	Verbal				X
Wisconsin	Verbal and written				
TOTAL	7	3	2	7	2

* The law was enacted in 2007 and also requires the information to be included in the written materials; however, the materials have not yet been updated.

† The law was enacted in 2009, the written materials have not yet been updated.

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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