

Local Policymaking Options in States Where Abortion will Remain Legal

The decision in *Dobbs* is an affront to freedom and justice. Localities in states where abortion will remain legal pursuant to state law have different opportunities and options for policymaking when it comes to protecting abortion access. This document is a menu of options for localities to consider in order to protect and expand access and stem the worst harms from the *Dobbs* decision. This menu does not incorporate an analysis of state laws, which may preempt some of these options.

1. Protecting abortion providers and out-of-state pregnant people seeking abortion care from criminalization or civil penalties by authorities in their states.

- a. Refuse to use local law enforcement to arrest and detain abortion providers or those seeking abortions. Template [here](#).
- b. Refuse to voluntarily share information with out-of-state law enforcement for the purposes of criminalizing or penalizing abortion providers or those seeking abortions.
- c. Commit to objecting to subpoenas requesting medical records or other information in connection with investigation of abortion, and instead force courts to compel their cooperation
- d. Refuse to execute extradition requests from in connection with out-of-state efforts to investigate and criminalize or civilly prosecute abortion and pregnancy outcomes. This will require engagement with your Police Department to understand how they currently handle extradition requests.
- e. Build relationships with Sheriffs and Prosecutors since they will play in role in handling out-of-state investigations aiming to criminalize abortion.

2. Supporting clinics in your state that are likely to see an influx of patients seeking care.

- a. Use municipal budget allocations to fund abortion. Do not limit access to that funding to city residents. More on the different ways that localities can do this [here](#).
- b. Pass a clinic safety ordinance like [Columbus, Ohio's ordinance](#) protecting patients and providers from harassment.

3. Be a model employer and use contracting and procurement powers to provide abortion to access to municipal employees and contractors.

- a. Ensure your paid sick and/or family leave policies are inclusive of time for employees seeking abortion care. Do not collect data on the reason for travel.
- b. To the extent it is permitted by state law, ensure that abortion care is covered by the health insurance that your municipality offers to its employees.
- c. Require government contractors to cover abortion care for their workers. Template [here](#).

4. Fight misinformation in the wake of the *Dobbs* decision.

- a. Pass an ordinance regulating crisis pregnancy centers that provide false and misleading information about abortion. More on that [here](#).
- b. Use websites, automated texts, central phone lines, and more to make rapidly changing information and guidance available for both North Carolina residents and residents coming in from out-of-state about clinics in the state, medication abortion, etc.

5. Use your public platform to support abortion rights.

- a. Pass a resolution supporting reproductive rights at the state and federal level.
- b. Join local protests organized in the wake of the *Dobbs* decision.
- c. Use appropriate [messaging guidance](#) to speak authentically about your support of abortion rights.

6. Protect individuals from being discriminated against for their reproductive choices by passing [an ordinance as St. Louis, MO did](#).

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to LiJia Gong (lgong@localprogress.org).

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