

## THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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## AG HEALEY WARNS PATIENTS ABOUT CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS

Advisory Informs People That Crisis Pregnancy Centers Do Not Offer Abortion or Comprehensive Reproductive Care

**BOSTON** – In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade, Attorney General Maura Healey today issued a consumer advisory warning patients seeking reproductive health services about the limited and potentially misleading nature of the services provided by crisis pregnancy centers. In Massachusetts, abortion remains legal, and people have a right to access comprehensive reproductive healthcare.

In today's <u>multilingual advisory</u>, AG Healey urges patients to do their research before making an appointment to access abortion or reproductive healthcare, especially if they are seeking information about abortion care. Crisis Pregnancy Centers do not provide comprehensive reproductive healthcare, rather they are organizations that seek to prevent people from accessing abortion care. If you are pregnant and looking to understand your abortion options, you should consult with a licensed reproductive healthcare provider.

"While crisis pregnancy centers claim to offer reproductive healthcare services, their goal is to prevent people from accessing abortion and contraception," said **AG Healey**. "In Massachusetts, you have the right to a safe and legal abortion. We want to ensure that patients can protect themselves from deceptive and coercive tactics when seeking the care they need."

"In Massachusetts, so-called crisis pregnancy centers outnumber legitimate abortion care providers 3 to 1," said **Senator Elizabeth Warren**. "I strongly commend Attorney General Healey and community partners for their efforts to crack down on these deceptive organizations to protect residents and women coming to Massachusetts seeking abortion care. I'll keep fighting in Congress to stop these harmful practices nationwide."

"People facing an unintended pregnancy deserve compassionate, medically-accurate care," said **Rebecca Hart Holder, Executive Director of Reproductive Equity Now.** "Crisis pregnancy centers, or fake clinics, are dangerous facilities that use deceptive advertising to deceive pregnant people into believing that they provide abortion care, when in reality, many do not even have doctors on staff to discuss the full range of health care options with clients. These facilities are often funded by anti-abortion organizations and have one goal in mind: to stop pregnant people from accessing abortion care. That's why clear and accurate information on the dangers of CPCs is so important. In a post-Roe America, we need to ensure people know how to navigate legitimate, unbiased reproductive health care."

The advisory warns that while Crisis Pregnancy Centers may appear to be reproductive health care clinics, they do not provide abortion care or abortion referrals, contraception, or other reproductive health care, despite what they may advertise. Importantly, people who are pregnant or believe they may be pregnant should know that:

- Most Crisis Pregnancy Centers are not licensed medical facilities or staffed by licensed doctors or nurses.
- Some Crisis Pregnancy Centers offer ultrasounds performed by unlicensed personnel, which may lead to inaccurate or misleading results about a pregnancy.
- Crisis Pregnancy Centers staffed by unlicensed personnel are not required to keep your medical records private.
- Unlicensed Crisis Pregnancy Centers are not required to follow codes of ethics or standards of care that govern healthcare professions.
- Crisis Pregnancy Centers often provide inaccurate and misleading information about abortion and the medical and mental health effects of abortion.
- Crisis Pregnancy Centers often mislead people about how far they are into their pregnancy.
- Crisis Pregnancy Centers often try to delay scheduling appointments to push people beyond the point at which they can obtain an abortion.
- Many Crisis Pregnancy Centers are located near clinics that provide abortion and use similar sounding names. When you arrive for your appointment, make sure you are in the right place.

The AG's advisory offers advice for patients seeking reproductive health services, including looking at online reviews before making an appointment, asking whether the center is licensed, and looking out for warning signs. Warning signs include that the center:

- Is listed as a pregnancy resource center, pregnancy help center, pregnancy care center, or women's resource center on websites such as: <a href="https://helpinyourarea.com/massachusetts/">https://helpinyourarea.com/massachusetts/</a>.
- Advertises free pregnancy tests, abortion counseling, pre-abortion screenings, abortion education, but do not provide abortion or help you access care elsewhere.
- Attempts to delay your appointment.

• Uses tactics to try to pressure you into continuing a pregnancy, for example, by providing baby clothes or a plastic fetus.

For help finding a licensed reproductive healthcare provider, talk to your doctor or check this list: <a href="https://abortioncarenewengland.org/providers">https://abortioncarenewengland.org/providers</a>.

The Attorney General's Office is committed to securing the civil rights of all people in Massachusetts or traveling to Massachusetts to access healthcare. If you have concerns about your experience with a crisis pregnancy center, file a complaint with our Civil Rights Division online or at 617-963-2917.

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