

October 25, 2022

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL CONVENES ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION WITH REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS AND PRIVATE LAW FIRMS ON DEFENDING ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES

Raoul Discusses Defending the Legal Rights of Abortion Patients and Providers

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul convened a roundtable meeting with representatives of leading abortion access organizations and representatives from top law firms in Illinois to discuss ways to address an anticipated rising need for pro bono legal representation of abortion providers, patients and support groups.

“As states around the country, particularly those surrounding Illinois, ban or severely restrict abortion, we are concerned about other states’ laws instilling fear, curbing access to abortion, and punishing patients and providers in Illinois. The legal community must unite to meet these challenges,” Raoul said. “As the legal landscape around abortion changes rapidly, no one should fear legal ramifications for seeking or providing essential health care services in Illinois. I appreciate everyone who participated in this discussion to kick off what I hope will be an ongoing collaborative effort to protect abortion patients and providers in Illinois.”

During the meeting, reproductive rights organizations described the legal issues they have faced following the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and how private law firms could help fulfill needs for pro bono legal representation. These organizations said they anticipate a continued fight against legal issues amid the evolving legal landscape.

“We are in a reproductive health care crisis where people are finding themselves unable to access the services they need and deserve. This is an all-hands-on deck moment,” said Jennifer Welch, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood Illinois Action. “Attorney General Raoul reaching out to the legal community is helping to ensure and protect Planned Parenthood of Illinois’ freedom to provide much needed care to our patients regardless of their income level or their zip code.”

“In Illinois, we have done the hard work over decades in the courts and the legislature to ensure abortion is legal and accessible in Illinois,” said Ameri Klafeta, Director of the Women’s and Reproductive Rights Project at the ACLU of Illinois. “Now that we have those policies, we must ensure providers and patients are not targeted as other states attempt to impose their harmful policies inside Illinois.”

“The moment we are in demands that Illinois expands access to abortion — thousands of people across the country are depending on it. This is why we applaud the work of Attorney General Kwame Raoul and his office as they not only do critical work to defend the protections we already have in place, but also connect organizations like the Chicago Abortion Fund to vital legal resources so that we can continue to support our callers from across the country in accessing care,” said Megan Jeyifo, Chicago Abortion Fund Executive Director. “Every day, workers at Illinois clinics, hospitals, and abortion funds do whatever it takes to make access a reality. Our callers, staff, providers, and volunteers must be legally protected. The Attorney General’s work affirms that abortion is healthcare and a right, and that here in Illinois we will treat it as such, no matter what.”

Representatives from Illinois law firms provided information about their pro bono programs and explained how their firms’ representation have supported reproductive rights.

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* in June has led to at least 13 states banning or severely restricting access to abortion, while additional states like Indiana have bans that could go into effect if challengers lose in court.

While Illinois law protects access to reproductive health care as a fundamental right and federal law ensures the constitutional right to interstate travel, states like Texas have passed laws seeking to impede residents' ability to travel to states like Illinois to obtain an abortion. Providers who perform reproductive health care services in Illinois on out-of-state patients are concerned they could face ruinous civil and criminal liability in other states, whose laws are changing rapidly.

In addition to the financial and logistical hurdles of traveling long distances for abortion care, out-of-state patients also fear legal repercussions when they return home to a state that has banned abortion.

Raoul gave an overview of his office's work to protect abortion access in Illinois and to advocate for access beyond the state's borders, including by:

- Issuing a [Know your Rights Guide](#) informing the public that they have a protected right to an abortion in Illinois.
- Sending a [letter to Illinois law enforcement](#) instructing that abortion is not a crime in Illinois.
- Publishing a [consumer alert](#) with tips on how individuals can protect their sensitive personal information and digital footprints while using apps and online platforms.
- Regularly filing [amicus briefs](#) in court in support of reproductive rights.
- Convening state attorneys general and representatives from the U.S. Department of Justice to [learn about enforcement of the federal FACE Act](#), and promoting communication between federal and state law enforcement to protect the safety of those providing and accessing reproductive health services.



PROTECT YOUR DIGITAL PRIVACY WHEN SEEKING REPRODUCTIVE CARE

Follow these tips to help reduce your digital footprint and prevent the disclosure of sensitive personal information to third parties.

Information from various sources could be combined to create a very detailed picture of the locations you visit in person, online searches you perform, and numerous other pieces of sensitive personal information that you may not wish to be disclosed.

Anytime you use an app that is on your phone or install a new app you should be aware of what permissions the app is requesting and decide whether to grant the app access to your information.

You can take the following steps to protect your sensitive personal information from disclosure to any third parties who do not need this information or may even seek to use this information against you.

Please keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive list of entities that may have sensitive data about your activities and locations. For example, your financial institutions and ride share companies also may have sensitive data about you.

Tips to protect your digital privacy while seeking reproductive care:



Turn off location services on your wireless phone - Avoid, when asked, giving any app permission to access your device's location data. Many of the apps that resell data to data brokers don't really need your location information.

To visit a place without revealing your location you should turn off location services on your phone to prevent your phone from transmitting your location.

Apple iPhones: go to Settings/Privacy/Location Services/Tracking

Android phones: go to Settings/Location



Turn off ad personalization on your phone - Some companies access your search history, sites visited, apps used, location, and other data and then use that information to determine which ads to display on your phone. To turn off ad personalization:

Apple iPhones: go to Settings/Privacy/Apple Advertising

Android phones: go to Settings/Google services/Ads/Reset advertising ID to disable personalized ads



Adjust your online privacy settings - In addition to your phone tracking your location, be aware that search engines and map providers that you use may track your location. You can limit this additional form of location tracking by changing privacy settings within your accounts with those services.

For more specifics and instructions for Apple iPhone and Android phones, go to www.support.google.com and search "Managing Location History."



Research any period tracking apps or fertility tracker apps you are using - These apps may sell or share the very sensitive information you provide. Carefully read the app's privacy policy and FAQ. If in doubt, consider deleting the app and asking them to destroy the data in your account.



Do not share sensitive personal information on social media - Be aware that information you post on your social media pages could be publicly available if you do not limit sharing, or if one of your social media friends discloses the information.

Consider refraining from posting anything on social media while visiting a reproductive care center - Even if your location tracking is turned off, social media postings and tags associated with businesses near reproductive care facilities could be combined with your search history to create a profile that might unintentionally share more information than desired.



Use encrypted messaging instead of unprotected SMS text messages - Encrypted messages are designed to allow only the intended recipient to read the message and prevent the contents of the message from being intercepted by any third parties.



Protect your online search history. First log out of open accounts, use a private web browser and the Do Not Track option, or set up a VPN -

- Make sure to log out of social media accounts, email, and tech platforms before conducting your search for reproductive services.
- If you are researching reproductive care on your phone, computer, or other device, consider using a private web browser that does not save your search history and blocks web trackers.
- Use the Private Mode setting in your browser. Private Mode means that the browser will not collect and store your online searches.

Google Chrome/Incognito
Mozilla Firefox/Private Browsing

Microsoft Edge/In Private
Safari/Private Window

- Always select the Do Not Track option under your browser privacy settings on your phone, computer or other device. The Do Not Track option requests that any website you visit does not use their tracking cookies. However, these requests do not have to be honored.
- Consider using a Virtual Private Network or VPN to access the internet from your phone, computer, or other device. It provides an IP address (the digital identification label for your device) that is different from your actual IP address. That means that if a third party is trying to track your location, they will not be able to determine your location based on the IP address associated with your browsing session.
- To use a VPN you have to first download a VPN (paid or free) program or app on your selected device. You will then need to activate the VPN before taking any actions you wish to remain private and anonymous.

If you have questions or concerns about your privacy while seeking reproductive care, please contact our office by completing a consumer complaint form online at www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov or by calling 1-800-386-5438 (Chicago) • 1-800-243-0618 (Springfield) • 1-800-243-0607 (Carbondale).





September 23, 2022

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL JOINS COALITION IN PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO INTERSTATE TRAVEL TO SEEK ABORTIONS

Raoul Argues Texas' Laws Violate Individuals' Constitutional Right to Interstate Travel

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general in filing an amicus brief to protect the right of individuals to travel out of Texas to obtain an abortion. [The multi-state amicus brief](#) was submitted in *Fund Texas Choice v. Paxton*, in support of a motion for preliminary injunction submitted by reproductive rights advocates seeking to halt enforcement of several Texas anti-abortion laws.

Raoul and the coalition argue that Texas residents, as well as coalition state residents visiting or attending school in Texas, have the right to travel to pro-reproductive rights states to access legal abortions.

"The Texas laws unconstitutionally infringe on the right to travel and to obtain safe, legal health care in states like Illinois that protect abortion rights," Raoul said. "Illinois remains a proud reproductive health care oasis that respects women's bodily autonomy and fundamental rights. Now more than ever, I will continue to advocate for the right to access reproductive health care in Illinois and across the country."

As a state that is committed to protecting access to reproductive health care, Raoul said Illinois has a profound interest in preserving the right to travel for the millions of individuals living in states with restrictive abortion laws. He and the coalition say that interference with the right to interstate travel poses a substantial threat to the liberty and safety of those individuals, some who may need to leave Texas under urgent circumstances.

Texas' anti-abortion laws deprive Texas residents from being able to access the reproductive care they need within Texas' borders. Additionally, Texas lawmakers have indicated they are seeking to impede an individual's ability to travel across state lines to obtain an abortion, to provide an abortion, or to support a patient in need of an abortion.

Raoul argues that while Texas may regulate abortion within its borders, intruding on the right to interstate travel, including for abortion, is unlawful. Along with residents from the other coalition states, Illinois residents live in Texas to attend college, go to graduate school, serve in the military or serve as temporary workers. Illinois residents also enter Texas as visitors each year, so Raoul has a significant interest in ensuring those residents may leave Texas and return to Illinois to access time-sensitive, lawful and safe medical care, including abortions.

Raoul's brief supports a group of abortion funds and providers who seek to travel to other states to provide legal abortion services or to provide logistical support for people in Texas who want to access reproductive care in states where it is legal. But they fear financial ruin or prosecution for assisting individuals seeking legal abortion as a result of Texas' anti-abortion laws.

Joining Attorney General Raoul in submission of the amicus brief are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington, and Washington, D.C.

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