

IN FREE FALL: REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS IN AMERICA

POPULATION INSTITUTE'S ANNUAL REPORT CARD SHOWS SLIPPAGE: U.S. GRADE FALLS TO A "D"



1/20

LOUISIANA IS ONE OF 20 STATES NOW RECEIVING A FAILING GRADE AND THE WORST MAY BE YET TO COME.

LOUISIANA RECEIVED A FAILING GRADE, IN PART, BECAUSE:

Louisiana does not mandate sex education in public schools.

Louisiana restricts abortion coverage in private insurance plans by not allowing any abortion coverage in health insurance plans sold on the insurance exchanges.

Louisiana has enacted a number of laws, which make it unnecessarily difficult for a woman to have an abortion if she chooses to do so.

63% of women in Louisiana live in a county without an abortion provider.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In releasing its fifth annual *50-State Report Card on Reproductive Health and Rights*, the Population Institute lowered the U.S. grade from a “D+” to a “D”. The report card, the most comprehensive report card of its kind, tracks multiple indicators of reproductive health and rights, including access to family planning and abortion services.

The Institute’s president Robert Walker said, “For the past five years, reproductive health and rights in the U.S. have been on a slippery slope.” Five years ago nine states received an “F”. In this year’s report card 20 states—including Louisiana—received a failing grade. Walker warned, however, “The worst may be yet to come, as Congress and the new Administration are expected to slash federal funding for family planning and comprehensive sex education. The slippery slope is becoming a free fall.”

Walker emphasized that *“It’s not just abortion rights that are under siege; it’s also access to family planning services, and when women are denied access to contraception everyone loses: there are more unintended pregnancies, more abortions, and higher health care costs.”*

This year’s report card also draws attention to “a growing national divide” on reproductive health and rights, and Walker warned that Louisiana is “on the wrong side of that divide.” Louisiana, which received an “F”, was one of 20 states receiving a failing grade in the latest report card. Five years ago Louisiana received an “F”.

MANY FACTORS ACCOUNTED FOR LOUISIANA’S FAILING GRADE INCLUDING POOR SCORES IN PREVENTION AND ACCESS

Using eleven criteria, the Institute’s report card ranked each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia on four broad indicators relating to reproductive health and rights: effectiveness, prevention, affordability, and access. Based upon their composite scores (0-100), each state received a “core”

grade (A, B, C, D or F), but some states received an additional “plus” or a “minus” for factors not reflected in the core grade.

Only 21 states received a “B-” or higher. Just five states (California, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington) received an “A”. The following states received a failing grade in 2016: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Walker warned that *“A woman’s reproductive health should not depend on where she lives, but it does, as women in many areas are experiencing reduced access to reproductive health care services including abortion.”* Walker noted that 19 states have refused to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, leaving tens of millions of women without improved access to contraception and other health care services. Walker also noted that in 27 states today more than 50% of women now live in a county without an abortion provider.

Federal support for reproductive health and rights could suffer a major reversal in 2017. Congress and the new Administration are expected to curtail access to contraceptive services by blocking all funding for Planned Parenthood, defunding Title X, a 48-year old program that provides support to family planning clinics serving low-income households, and eliminating the Affordable Care Act’s no-cost birth control mandate. Walker noted that *“In the past five years most of the slippage on reproductive health has occurred at the state level, but this year could see unprecedented setbacks at the national level, including cuts in funding for comprehensive sex education in the schools and a return to abstinence only programs which have been proven to be ineffective.”*

Walker stressed that this year’s report card should be “an urgent call to action” for anyone who is concerned about reproductive health and rights. *“As disappointing as 2016 was, 2017 could be a whole lot worse.”*

F

LOUISIANA 34.0/100 | BREAKDOWN OF SCORES

EFFECTIVENESS

Teen Pregnancy Rate 8.5/15

Louisiana has a teen pregnancy rate of 66 pregnancies per 1,000 women aged 15-19. We set 40 pregnancies per 1,000 teen women by 2020 as the goal, which indicates that Louisiana has achieved 56.6% of the objective.

Unintended Pregnancy Rate 9.5/15

60% of Louisiana's total pregnancies are unintended, compared to the Healthy People 2020 objective of 44%. Thus, Louisiana has achieved 63.6% of the target rate.

PREVENTION

Sex Education 0/15

Louisiana does not mandate sex education in public schools.

Access to Emergency Contraception 0/5

Louisiana has no laws affirming a woman's right to emergency contraception in the emergency room.

Minors Access to Contraception 0/5

Louisiana does not explicitly allow all minors to consent to contraceptive services.

AFFORDABILITY

Medicaid Expansion 15/15

Louisiana has expanded their Medicaid program under the Affordable Care Act.

Medicaid Family Planning Expansions 0/5

Louisiana currently does not offer an expansion for family planning services to their Medicaid plan.

Insurance Coverage of Abortion 0/5

Louisiana restricts abortion coverage in private insurance plans by not allowing any abortion coverage in health insurance plans sold on the insurance exchanges.

ACCESS

Abortion Restrictions 0/10

Louisiana has the following laws, which make it unnecessarily difficult for a woman to have an abortion if she chooses to do so: abortion is prohibited after 20 weeks; the woman must undergo mandatory counseling including information on fetal pain, negative psychological effects and an ultrasound where the provider must display and describe the image; there is a mandatory waiting period of 24 hours between abortion counseling and procedure; parental consent is required; and clinicians who perform medication abortion procedures are required to be licensed physicians in the presence of the patient which by extension bans telemedicine.

TRAP Laws 0/5

Louisiana has enacted a series of TRAP laws which are targeted regulation of abortion providers beyond what is necessary to ensure patient safety.

Abortion Access 1/5

63% of women in Louisiana live in a county without an abortion provider.

For the complete report card and additional information, please visit: www.populationinstitute.org/reportcard



POPULATION
INSTITUTE

A special thanks to the **Guttmacher Institute** whose research made this report card possible.