

Michigan's Coercive Abortion Prevention Law

Information for Patients

Prescreening Summary

Under Michigan law it is illegal to coerce a woman to have an abortion.

Michigan law requires all abortion providers to ask any woman seeking an abortion if she has been coerced to have the abortion against her will.

What is coercion to have an abortion?

Under Michigan law, it is illegal to coerce a woman to have an abortion. Actions like assault, making threats to hurt, embarrass, or cause psychological or financial problems to any person, as well as harassing, restraining, or taking important legal documents are all forms of coercion. These are crimes that can lead to imprisonment and/or fines. Michigan law adds fines when these illegal behaviors are used to force a woman to have an abortion.

Coercion, or unlawful pressure to have an abortion, can happen in many relationships. If you are being physically or emotionally harmed, or if you are being controlled by your partner or another person, you may be experiencing coercion. Being pregnant can make you more vulnerable to abuse or coercion. Situations like human trafficking or child sexual abuse can also lead to coercion to abort. Because a pregnancy can bring criminal behavior to light, it can lead an abuser to coerce a pregnant victim to have an abortion.

When and how will I be asked about coercion to have an abortion?

Under Michigan law, you will be asked whether you are being coerced to have an abortion at your first visit to the doctor's office or clinic for an abortion. Your doctor, or an assistant to the doctor, will ask you questions about coercion or if you are being threatened in any way. These questions will be asked in private and your answers will not be shared with anyone unless you report acts that must be reported by state law, like child abuse. If you report coercion, you may still have the abortion, if it is your choice. If you do not want an abortion, but are afraid of what might happen, your provider will give you information about help and support. If you are being hurt or are afraid, your provider will explore safety options with you and offer information and referrals to help. Remember, this is not your fault and help is available.

**Help is available if you are being threatened or intimidated;
are being physically, emotionally, or sexually harmed;
or feel afraid for any reason.**

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
Michigan Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-855-VOICES4 (864-2374)
National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)