



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE

**DIRECTIVE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**25-01**

**DATE:** January 10, 2025

**TO:** Department of Health

**FROM:** Governor Jay Inslee

**SUBJECT:** Adopting an emergency rule regarding emergency abortion care in Washington state

In the wake of the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* terminating the half-century-old constitutional right to abortion, Washington state took strong legislative, regulatory, and budgetary action to safeguard and enhance reproductive rights in our state. This action included the issuance of Directive 24-12, whereby I instructed the Department of Health to issue a policy statement reaffirming existing state legal requirements for hospitals to provide emergency abortion care and to enforce those requirements when unmet.

Subsequent events call for further strengthening the bulwark guarding reproductive freedom and pregnant people's right to receive treatment in a medical emergency in our state. Codifying clear legal requirements to provide emergency abortion care according to the standard of care and the informed consent of pregnant persons will promote patients' access to needed care and health care providers' ability to serve their patients in a manner consistent with their sound professional judgment.

To that end, I hereby direct the Department of Health to adopt a rule requiring hospitals that provide emergency services to offer and provide treatment, including abortion where warranted, to a pregnant person with an emergency medical condition according to the standard of care or to make a legally authorized transfer. The rule must prohibit hospitals from withholding care because a person is pregnant, and from prioritizing the continuation of a pregnancy or the health of an embryo or fetus over the health or safety of the pregnant person without their informed consent.

I direct the Department to adopt this rule on an emergency basis because, given the likelihood of imminent changes to federal abortion policy that would interfere with access to emergency abortion care and imperil the health of pregnant persons in Washington state, immediate adoption is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, and general welfare.