

The Population Institute Releases its 2012 Report Card on Reproductive Health and Rights



Georgia
is one of 18 states
receiving a "D"

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Population Institute today released its first ever report card on reproductive health and rights in the U.S., and the results were not encouraging. Georgia received a D. Nine states receive a failing grade. The U.S. as a whole received a "C-."

In releasing the report card, Robert Walker, the organization's President, said, "Georgia's poor grade suggests that it is not adequately serving the reproductive health needs of women in the state.

"Every woman," Walker said, "needs access to affordable reproductive health care and young people need comprehensive sex education in the schools. When states fail to provide these services it contributes to high rates of unintended pregnancies, including teenage pregnancies."

Using nine 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 (30 points): Statewide, what percentage of pregnancies is unintended, and how high is the state's teenage pregnancy rate?

AFFORDABILITY (30 points): Does the state have policies designed to make birth control affordable to uninsured and low-income individuals?

PREVENTION (20 points): Does the state promote comprehensive sex education in the schools, and does it support access to emergency contraception?

ACCESS (20 points): Does the state impose harassing or burdensome requirements on those seeking family planning or abortion services?

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" reflecting factors, such as pending legislation, not accounted for in the core grade.

Georgia received a D grade because:

- It mandates sex education and HIV education, but not only can parents opt out neither sex education nor HIV education is required to cover condoms or contraception.
- It does not have a law affirming a woman's right to emergency contraception.
- It does not have sufficient funding for family planning clinics serving low income women.

Only twelve states received a B- or higher. Just three states (California, Oregon and Washington) received an "A". Washington received an "A+" rating and the highest composite score. Nine states received a failing grade ("F"). States receiving a failing grade included Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Tennessee.

Walker said, "Voters who care about reproductive health and rights need to know how their state ranks vis-à-vis other states. Georgia and the U.S. as a whole perform poorly compared to most other developed countries in the world. Despite declines in teenage pregnancy, America's teenage pregnancy rate is still higher than any other industrialized nation."

Nearly half of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unintended, and nearly 3 out of 10 teenage girls in the U.S. will become pregnant.

In issuing the report, Walker warned that the reproductive health and rights of women in Georgia and other states is under continuing assault. "Women and men who care about reproductive health and rights need to make their voices heard."



Georgia 45.3 / 100

Breakdown of Scores



EFFECTIVENESS

Teen Pregnancy Rate

10.7 / 15

Georgia has a teen pregnancy rate of 80 pregnancies per 1,000 women aged 15-19. Healthy People 2020 set 63 pregnancies per 1,000 teen women as the goal, which indicates that Georgia has achieved 71.6% of the objective.

Unintended Pregnancy Rate

10.6 / 15

57% of Georgia's total pregnancies are unintended, compared to the Healthy People 2020 objective of 44%. Thus, Georgia has achieved 70.5% of the target rate.



PREVENTION

Sex Education

0 / 10

Georgia does not mandate sex education in public schools (parents can choose that their children opt-out).

Access to Emergency Contraception

0 / 10

Georgia has no laws affirming a woman's right to emergency contraception.



AFFORDABILITY

Medicaid Expansions

6 / 10

Georgia offers Medicaid expansions to cover family planning services for people who otherwise do not qualify for Medicaid. The expansion, in the form of a waiver, is offered to people with income levels up to 200% of the federal poverty line, as well as people who have lost coverage postpartum. Women must be at least 18 years old to be covered.

Insurance Coverage of Contraceptives

10 / 10

Georgia has comprehensive laws regarding private insurance coverage of contraceptives, meaning that the state requires private insurance companies that cover prescription drugs to also cover all FDA-approved forms of contraception and has not enacted a refusal clause.

Funding for Family Planning Clinics

1 / 10

Georgia spent \$312,000 in the fiscal year 2010 on family planning clinics serving low-income households. This amount, when divided by the state's 2,003,614 women of reproductive age (15-44), represents an expenditure of \$0.16 per woman.



ACCESS

Abortion Restrictions

7 / 10

Georgia has the following laws, which make it unnecessarily difficult for a woman to have an abortion if she chooses to do so: the woman must receive counseling 24 hours before her abortion procedure, which must include information about fetal pain. Furthermore, parental notice is required before the woman may undergo the procedure.

Clinic Access Protection

0 / 10

Georgia has no laws that protect people's access to family planning clinics.