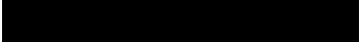


September 12, 2022

Attorney General Maura Healey  
1 Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108  


*Sent via U.S. Mail and Email*

**Re: Civil Rights Protections of Pregnancy Resource Centers**

Attorney General Healey:

First Liberty Institute is a non-profit law firm dedicated to defending and restoring religious liberty for all Americans. Massachusetts Family Institute is a nonpartisan public policy organization dedicated to strengthening families in Massachusetts. We represent a coalition of pregnancy resource centers in Massachusetts, including Boston Center for Pregnancy Choices, Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center, Clearway Clinic, Bethlehem House, and Your Options Medical (collectively “PRCs”). Each of our clients are concerned by your office’s recent actions against pregnancy resource centers along with its refusal to enforce the law to protect these centers from the wave of criminal actions taken against them.

Specifically, your letter of July 19, 2022, suggests you may seek civil sanctions against our clients. See Exhibit 1. As outlined below, any effort by your office to sanction the PRC’s as you described would violate the U.S. Constitution. Further, on July 6, 2022, you issued a “consumer advisory” warning against PRCs and encouraged consumers to file complaints with your office about their work. See Exhibit 2. We ask that you remove the “consumer advisory” you issued on July 6, 2022 and withdraw your letter of July 19, 2022. Further, we ask that you make clear what actions you are taking, or will take, to protect the PRCs. Please direct all communications regarding this issue to us.

**Reproductive health facilities, like the PRC’s, provide essential services.**

The PRCs’ religious beliefs motivate them to care for women facing unintended pregnancies. They distribute free diapers, wipes, formula, baby food, blankets, and clothing. Many offer parenting programs that help equip new parents facing the important job of raising their children. Others offer free screenings for STD’s along with free pregnancy tests, medical consultations, and professional counseling. For those who respond negatively to their abortion experience, the PRCs provide supportive counseling and mentors. Some even recruit knitters throughout their community who knit sweaters, booties, and blankets that are given—free of charge—to women who request them for their babies.

As reproductive health facilities, our clients also provide essential professional services. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health licenses at least two of the PRCs as medical clinics who provide medical services under the supervision of a medical doctor. Others employ licensed professional counselors to provide mental health care for women seeking to process their reproductive health decisions.

These are the groups you targeted with your letter: men and women, motivated by their faith to provide medical and professional counseling services and give away diapers, baby wipes, and hand-knitted baby booties to those in need. Rather than protect these faith-based organizations providing professional reproductive health services, as is the duty of your office, your letter has placed them in further jeopardy. More than one has faced violent threats and vandalism of their facilities such that women hoping to obtain free baby formula (in a time of its short supply) and a baby blanket are now scared to approach these reproductive health facilities.

For example, a group calling itself “Jane’s Revenge” violently attacked our client, Clearway Clinic, the very night you issued your “consumer advisory” against PRCs causing significant economic damage and stoking fear. It was a clear attempt to intimidate and drive away this faith-based, nonprofit organization. This is a crime in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. A picture of part of the damage is below.



Another facility, pictured below, found graffiti scrawled across their entrance. The phrase, “Not Real Abortion Clinic” unartfully echoes the allegations you, within days of this attack, leveled against the PRCs that provide counseling, medical services, STD screening, and free baby sweaters knitted by volunteers who love babies and their mothers.



Two other facilities we represent arrived to find their buildings splattered with red paint clearly intended to look like blood. Vandals, armed with spray paint, also scrawled threats to their physical security, “Jane’s Revenge,” and symbols for organizations who are known to fire-bomb buildings and physically assault private citizens. No arrests have been made. No criminal defendants identified. And, to our knowledge, you have taken no action to investigate and prosecute Jane’s Revenge or other anarchists.





We are deeply troubled by the hostility you have exhibited, and sanctioned, towards our clients, all of whom are faith-based organizations simply seeking to live out their faith by serving pregnant women in desperate need of assistance. Instead of applauding the PRCs for the vital work they perform in their communities, your office maliciously accused these centers of posing a threat to “pregnant people” and that “pregnant people” should be warned against visiting them. You have also incorrectly stated that pregnancy resource centers use “deceptive and coercive tactics” when they provide their free, essential services. Even more concerning, you threatened legal action against at least one pregnancy resource center for allegedly interfering with access to abortion services.

Your office’s hostility against our clients’ religious beliefs raises serious concerns that you intend to take legal action against our clients in violation of their constitutional rights. As detailed below, your threatened course of action likely violates both the Free Speech and Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Further, your failure to investigate the crimes committed against our clients and bring the culprits behind those crimes to justice demonstrates your refusal to provide equal protection under the law.

At a minimum, we ask that you outline the actions you have taken and intend to take to protect these PRCs. Has your office directed law enforcement to investigate the violent acts against the PRCs? Have you written a letter to the leadership of “Jane’s Revenge” informing them of the criminal and civil penalties your office may seek for their acts of vandalism and trespass against our clients? Are you pursuing civil sanctions against those interfering with access to reproductive health services, destroying or damaging a reproductive health facility, and intimidating and interfering with persons seeking or providing reproductive health services at these PRCs? Please respond with detailed actions taken by your office—or that your office intends to take—to protect the citizens of your state who work and volunteer at these PRCs to love, counsel, feed, and clothe mothers and their babies at their reproductive health facilities.

We remind you that, as an officer of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you have a duty to *all* citizens of Massachusetts, including those with whom you may politically disagree as they knit baby blankets and distribute baby food.

**An Attorney General may not target speech she dislikes, nor enforce viewpoints she prefers.**

In your July 19 letter, you threaten enforcement action against the PRCs despite the fact that they are engaged in constitutionally protected speech and exercise. Any such enforcement would likely discriminate on the basis of content and viewpoint in violation of the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. “Content-based regulations target speech based on its communicative content” and “are presumptively unconstitutional.” *Nat’l Inst. of Fam. & Life Advoc. v. Becerra*, 138 S. Ct. 2361, 2371 (2018). Courts heavily scrutinize such government action because “the First Amendment means that government has no power to restrict expression because of its message, its ideas, its subject matter, or its content.” *Police Dep’t of City of Chi. v. Mosley*, 408 U.S. 92, 95 (1972); *see also Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202, 216 (1982) (“The Equal Protection Clause directs that all persons similarly circumstanced shall be treated alike.”).

Thus, while you may disagree with the PRCs’ speech, “the government may not selectively shield the public from some kinds of speech on the ground that they are more offensive than others.” *McCullen v. Coakley*, 573 U.S. 464, 477 (2014). Your threatened enforcement actions single out entities that discuss the topic of pregnancy, a content-based distinction that violates the U.S. Constitution.

Further, your threatened enforcement actions discriminate against facilities that hold a viewpoint against abortion. The Supreme Court of the United States has repeatedly made clear that such viewpoint discrimination by the government is strictly prohibited. *See Cornelius v. NAACP Legal Def. & Educ. Fund*, 473 U.S. 788, 811 (1985) (holding that the government violates the First Amendment when it suppresses the viewpoint espoused); *Perry Educ. Ass’n v. Perry Local Educators’ Ass’n*, 460 U.S. 37, 46 (1983) (holding that viewpoint discrimination is prohibited regardless of forum).

The government violates the law when it suppresses or excludes private speech simply because the speech expresses a religious viewpoint. *See Shurtleff v. City of Boston*, 142 S. Ct. 1583, 1593 (2022) (holding the exclusion of a Christian flag from Boston’s flag-raising program is unconstitutional viewpoint discrimination); *Good News Club v. Milford Cent. Sch.*, 533 U.S. 98 (2001) (holding that the exclusion of a religious club’s use of school property because it was religious constitutes viewpoint discrimination.); *Rosenberger v. Rector & Visitors of Univ. of Va.*, 515 U.S. 819 (1995) (finding that viewpoint discrimination violates the First Amendment, fosters hostility toward religion, and undermines state neutrality toward religion); *Lamb’s Chapel v. Ctr. Moriches Union Free Sch. Dist.*, 508 U.S. 384 (1993) (holding that a government actor may not favor one viewpoint at the expense of another); *Widmar v. Vincent*, 454 U.S. 263 (1981) (rejecting

a college's exclusion of a religious group's access to facilities because its policy excluded based upon the viewpoint of the club's speech).

The Supreme Court of the United States characterizes unlawful viewpoint discrimination as “an egregious form of content discrimination.” *Rosenberger*, 515 U.S. at 829; *see also id.* at 828 (finding “[i]t is axiomatic that the government may not regulate speech based on its substantive content or the message it conveys”); *id.* at 829 (“The government must abstain from regulating speech when the specific motivating ideology or the opinion or perspective of the speaker is the rationale for the restriction.”); *Cornelius*, 473 U.S. at 806 (“[T]he government violates the First Amendment when it denies access to a speaker solely to suppress the point of view he espouses on an otherwise includible subject.”); *Perry Educ. Ass’n*, 460 U.S. at 46 (government may not “suppress expression merely because public officials oppose the speaker’s view”).

Our clients emphatically deny and oppose your erroneous comments regarding the vital services they provide to their communities. Your attempts to use the bully pulpit and Massachusetts law as a means to intimidate and silence our clients, though not rising to the level of the vandalism and physical threats they have already faced, expose your hostility to their religious viewpoints. Your office may not require the PRCs to espouse your preferred viewpoint. To do so is to violate the U.S. Constitution: “If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein.” *W. Virginia State Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624, 642 (1943).

Rather than expend further efforts to prescribe your preferred orthodoxy on the PRCs, we ask that you identify the measures you have taken, or are taking, to ensure their physical safety and maximize the space for the PRCs to advocate for their viewpoints on this important issue.

### **The Free Exercise Clause protects the PRCs against your threatened sanctions.**

The Free Exercise Clause guarantees to all Americans the “right to believe and profess whatever religious doctrine [they] desire[ ],” even doctrines out of favor with a majority of fellow citizens. *Employment Div. v. Smith*, 494 U.S. 872, 877 (1990). These beliefs “need not be acceptable, logical, consistent, or comprehensible to others in order to merit . . . protection.” *Thomas v. Review Bd. of Ind. Emp. Sec. Div.*, 450 U.S. 707, 714 (1981). Nor is it the role of government to determine whether an adherent has “correctly perceived” the commandments of his religion. *Thomas*, 450 U.S. at 716.

The First Amendment protects not only “the right to harbor religious beliefs inwardly and secretly” but also “does perhaps its most important work by protecting the ability of those who hold religious beliefs of all kinds to live out their faiths in daily life through the performance of (or abstention from) physical acts.” *Kennedy v. Bremerton Sch. Dist.*, 142 S. Ct. 2407, 2421 (2022). Thus, public officials may not act “in a manner

intolerant of religious beliefs or restrict[] practices because of their religious nature.” *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*, 141 S. Ct. 1868, 1877 (2021). Nor may they “act in a manner that passes judgment upon or presupposes the illegitimacy of religious beliefs and practices.” *Masterpiece Cakeshop, Ltd. v. Colorado C.R. Comm’n*, 138 S. Ct. 1719, 1731 (2018). Instead, “[t]he Constitution commits government itself to religious tolerance, and upon even slight suspicion that proposals for state intervention stem from animosity to religion or distrust of its practices, all officials must pause to remember their own high duty to the Constitution and to the rights it secures.” *Id.*

Here, your office has exhibited alarming hostility towards our clients and their religious beliefs. On multiple occasions you publicly demeaned the religious beliefs of the PRCs regarding the sanctity of human life. You incorrectly describe them as using “deceptive and coercive” tactics when serving their constituents and state they “provide inaccurate and misleading information” regarding abortion. Such comments are troubling not only because they impermissibly pass judgment on our clients’ religious beliefs, but also attempt to persuade the public that our clients’ religious beliefs are somehow incorrect and dangerous. *See id.* at 1731; *see also Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.*, 573 U.S. 682, 725 (2014) (stating it is not the government’s role “to say that . . . religious beliefs are mistaken”). These comments are “inappropriate for [an official] charged with the solemn responsibility of fair and neutral enforcement of [Massachusetts] law” and “cast doubt on the fairness and impartiality of” your office in any legal action it is considering against our clients. *Masterpiece Cakeshop*, 138 S. Ct. at 1729–31.

The Free Exercise Clause “forbids subtle departures from neutrality” and “covert suppression of particular religious beliefs.” *Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye, Inc. v. City of Hialeah*, 508 U.S. 520, 534 (1993). Therefore, any government action that creates “even slight suspicion that proposals for state intervention stem from animosity to religion or distrust of its practices” will be “set aside” by courts. *Lukumi*, 508 U.S. at 547. Your office’s overt animosity towards our clients’ religious beliefs goes far beyond a subtle departure from neutrality. You have placed a finger on the scale, tipping it toward the political position you prefer to be believed and followed. We urge you, instead, to remember your duty to serve Bay Staters of all faiths and to protect the rights of the PRCs as secured by the U.S. Constitution.

### **Your office must protect the PRC’s—even if it disagrees with them.**

As a civil rights attorney, in private practice you defended buffer zones to protect women from harassment at reproductive health facilities. The PRCs are reproductive health facilities protected by law. *See Greenhut v. Hand*, 996 F. Supp. 372, 375 (D.N.J. 1998) (“Congress obviously recognized, as does this court, that a woman’s reproductive health encompasses much more than access to a medical or surgical procedure . . . [the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (“FACE”)] also applies to facilities offering pregnant women counseling about alternatives to abortion.”); *Terry v. Reno*, 101 F.3d 1412, 1419 (D.C.Cir.1996) (noting that FACE protects “facilities providing pre-pregnancy

and pregnancy counseling services, as well as facilities counseling alternatives to abortion”).

Women are seeking the reproductive health services provided by the PRCs and, as described above, are facing intimidation and harassment—often violent and meant to intimidate access to the reproductive health services they offer. Yet, rather than bring the full weight of your office to bear upon those who commit crimes against reproductive health facilities in your state, you threaten to enforce civil sanctions against our clients because you disagree with their otherwise protected speech and religious exercise.

It is no defense to dismiss the crimes committed against our clients as protected speech. “The First Amendment does not protect violence.” *NAACP v. Claiborne Hardware Co.*, 458 U.S. 886, 916 (1982) *see also Samuels v. Mackell*, 401 U.S. 66, 75, (1971) (Douglas, J., concurring) (“Certainly violence has no sanctuary in the First Amendment, and the use of weapons, gunpowder, and gasoline may not constitutionally masquerade under the guise of ‘advocacy.’”). Your letter and “consumer advisory,” threatening civil sanctions against otherwise protected Constitutional rights, paints with too broad a brush, “broadly curtailing group activity leading to litigation [that] may easily become a weapon of oppression, however evenhanded its terms appear.” *NAACP v. Button*, 371 U.S. 415, 435–36 (1963). We, therefore, request that you provide what steps you have taken, or will take, to protect the PRCs against the crimes that have been committed against them.

## Conclusion

Reproductive health is a subject fraught with emotions and vast areas of disagreement. Our nation has long permitted the space for neighbors to disagree with one another. Much of that is owed to elected officials, like you, who “pause to remember [your] own high duty to the Constitution and to the rights it secures.” *Masterpiece Cakeshop*, 138 S. Ct. at 1731. This duty includes providing equal protection under the law to all people regardless of their viewpoints or religions. We ask that you respond, in writing within 14 days, to the requests made herein: of removing your July 6, 2022 “consumer advisory,” withdrawing your letter of July 19, 2022, and articulating how you have acted to protect, or will act to protect, our clients.

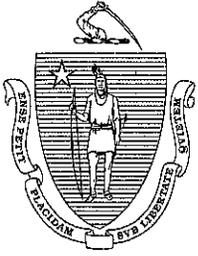
Thank you for your attention to this matter. If we may be of further service, please do not hesitate to call ( [REDACTED] ) or email ( [REDACTED] ).

Respectfully,

  
Jeremy Dys, Senior Counsel  
Ryan Gardner, Counsel  
First Liberty Institute

  
Andrew Beckwith, President  
Sam Whiting, Staff Attorney  
Massachusetts Family Institute

# EXHIBIT 1



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

ONE ASHBURTON PLACE  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108

MAURA HEALEY  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

TEL: (617) 727-2200  
www.mass.gov/ago

July 19, 2022

**BY OVERNIGHT MAIL**

Attleboro Women's Health Center  
Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center  
152 Emory Street Unit 4 Rear  
Attleboro, MA 02703

Re: Potential Violations of the Massachusetts Civil Rights Act

Dear Sir/Madam:

Please be advised that the Civil Rights Division of the Office of the Attorney General has received complaints alleging that you and/or your employees or volunteers have engaged in a pattern or practice of civil rights violations, including by interfering, or attempting to interfere, with the exercise of the constitutionally protected right to access abortion care in Massachusetts. See Moe v. Sec'y of Admin. and Fin., 382 Mass. 629 (1981). In particular, we have received information alleging that you and/or your employees or volunteers have:

- Led pregnant people to believe that they could obtain abortion care at your organization and had made appointments for abortion services at your organization, even though you do not and cannot provide that service;
- Delayed scheduling appointments for pregnant people who requested abortion services so that they were past the point at which they could legally obtain an abortion by the time that they were seen by your organization and learned that you are a crisis pregnancy center and not an abortion provider;
- Made confusing, deceptive, and/or misleading statements about the availability of abortion services and medically accurate options counseling at your organization, and then harassed and intimidated people who attempted to access those services at your organization;
- Placed volunteers or employees wearing "official looking vests" in the driveway that abuts Four Women Health Services ("Four Women")—a healthcare facility that provides abortion services—to direct Four Women's patients to your organization, causing patients to experience stress, confusion, and undue delay in navigating to care;



- Attempted to prevent pregnant people from leaving your facility when they realized that they were in the wrong place or otherwise declined your services;
- Followed pregnant people who left your facility to go to Four Women, yelling at them “do not kill your baby” and attempting to intimidate, pressure, or shame them away from accessing abortion services;
- Deliberately misrepresented information about the safety and efficacy of abortion in order to confuse, scare, or deceive people into carrying unwanted pregnancies to term;<sup>1</sup>
- Continued to harass pregnant people by phone or mail after they declined your services; and
- Harassed, intimidated, and/or threatened Four Women’s employees.

The Massachusetts Civil Rights Act prohibits interference or attempted inference by threats, intimidation, or coercion with the exercise or enjoyment of rights protected by the constitution or laws of the Commonwealth. G.L. c. 12, § 11H. To the extent you have interfered with the right of pregnant people in Massachusetts to access abortion care through conduct or tactics that are threatening, intimidating, or coercive, you and/or your employees or volunteers have violated the MCRA. Please be advised that violations of the Massachusetts Civil Rights Act can result in an award of compensatory damages for any aggrieved person or entity, litigation costs and reasonable attorneys’ fees, civil penalties up to \$5,000 per violation, and appropriate injunctive relief.

Accordingly, this letter constitutes a demand that you immediately cease and desist from engaging in this conduct. To the extent you continue to engage in this conduct, please be advised that the Office of the Attorney General may pursue appropriate legal action against you and any employees or volunteers who have engaged in this conduct.

Please contact me at [amanda.hainsworth@mass.gov](mailto:amanda.hainsworth@mass.gov) and (617) 963-2618 to further discuss this letter.

Sincerely,



Amanda Hainsworth  
Assistant Attorney General  
Managing Attorney  
Civil Rights Division  
Office of the Attorney General

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<sup>1</sup> For example, your website falsely claims that medication abortions are reversible and includes an inaccurate recitation of the risks associated with abortion.

## EXHIBIT 2

**Mass.gov**[\(1\) > Office of Attorney General Maura Healey \(/orgs/office-of-attorney-general-maura-healey\)](#)

## PRESS RELEASE

# AG Healey Warns Patients About Crisis Pregnancy Centers

## Advisory Informs People That Crisis Pregnancy Centers Do Not Offer Abortion or Comprehensive Reproductive Care

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

7/06/2022

Office of Attorney General Maura Healey

## MEDIA CONTACT

**Jillian Fennimore****Phone**

(617) 727-2543 (tel:6177272543)

**Online**[Jillian.Fennimore@mass.gov](mailto:Jillian.Fennimore@mass.gov) (mailto:Jillian.Fennimore@mass.gov)

**BOSTON** — In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade, Attorney General Maura Healey today issued a consumer advisory warning patients seeking reproductive health services about the limited and potentially misleading nature of the services provided by crisis pregnancy centers. In Massachusetts, abortion remains legal, and people have a right to access comprehensive reproductive healthcare.

In today's [multilingual advisory \(/service-details/crisis-pregnancy-centers-cpcs\)](/service-details/crisis-pregnancy-centers-cpcs), AG Healey urges patients to do their research before making an appointment to access abortion or reproductive healthcare, especially if they are seeking information about abortion care. Crisis Pregnancy Centers do not provide comprehensive reproductive healthcare, rather they are organizations that seek to prevent people from accessing abortion care. If you are pregnant and looking to understand your abortion options, you should consult with a licensed reproductive healthcare provider.

"While crisis pregnancy centers claim to offer reproductive healthcare services, their goal is to prevent people from accessing abortion and contraception," said **AG Healey**. "In Massachusetts, you have the right to a safe and legal abortion. We want to ensure that patients can protect themselves from deceptive and coercive tactics when seeking the care they need."

"In Massachusetts, so-called crisis pregnancy centers outnumber legitimate abortion care providers 3 to 1," said **Senator Elizabeth Warren**. "I strongly commend Attorney General Healey and community partners for their efforts to crack down on these deceptive organizations to protect residents and women coming to Massachusetts seeking abortion care. I'll keep fighting in Congress to stop these harmful practices nationwide."

"People facing an unintended pregnancy deserve compassionate, medically-accurate care," said **Rebecca Hart Holder, Executive Director of Reproductive Equity Now**. "Crisis pregnancy centers, or fake clinics, are dangerous facilities that use deceptive advertising to deceive pregnant people into believing that they provide abortion care, when in reality, many do not even have doctors on staff to discuss the full range of health care options with clients. These facilities are often funded by anti-abortion organizations and have one goal in mind: to stop pregnant people from accessing abortion care. That's why clear and accurate information on the dangers of CPCs is so important. In a post-Roe America, we need to ensure people know how to navigate legitimate, unbiased reproductive health care."

The advisory warns that while Crisis Pregnancy Centers may appear to be reproductive health care clinics, they do not provide abortion care or abortion referrals, contraception, or other reproductive health care, despite what they may advertise. Importantly, people who are pregnant or believe they may be pregnant should know that:

- Most Crisis Pregnancy Centers are not licensed medical facilities or staffed by licensed doctors or nurses.
- Some Crisis Pregnancy Centers offer ultrasounds performed by unlicensed personnel, which may lead to inaccurate or misleading results about a pregnancy.
- Crisis Pregnancy Centers staffed by unlicensed personnel are not required to keep your medical records private.
- Unlicensed Crisis Pregnancy Centers are not required to follow codes of ethics or standards of care that govern healthcare professions.
- Crisis Pregnancy Centers often provide inaccurate and misleading information about abortion and the medical and mental health effects of abortion.
- Crisis Pregnancy Centers often mislead people about how far they are into their pregnancy.
- Crisis Pregnancy Centers often try to delay scheduling appointments to push people beyond the point at which they can obtain an abortion.
- Many Crisis Pregnancy Centers are located near clinics that provide abortion and use similar sounding names. When you arrive for your appointment, make sure you are in the right place.

The [AG's advisory \(/service-details/crisis-pregnancy-centers-cpcs\)](#) offers advice for patients seeking reproductive health services, including looking at online reviews before making an appointment, asking whether the center is licensed, and looking out for warning signs. Warning signs include that the center:

- Is listed as a pregnancy resource center, pregnancy help center, pregnancy care center, or women's resource center on websites such as: <https://helpinyourarea.com/massachusetts/> (<https://helpinyourarea.com/massachusetts/>).
- Advertises free pregnancy tests, abortion counseling, pre-abortion screenings, abortion education, but do not provide abortion or help you access care elsewhere.
- Attempts to delay your appointment.
- Uses tactics to try to pressure you into continuing a pregnancy, for example, by providing baby clothes or a plastic fetus.

For help finding a licensed reproductive healthcare provider, talk to your doctor or check this list:

<https://abortioncarenewengland.org/providers> (<https://abortioncarenewengland.org/providers>).

The Attorney General's Office is committed to securing the civil rights of all people in Massachusetts or traveling to Massachusetts to access healthcare. If you have concerns about your experience with a crisis pregnancy center, file a complaint with our Civil Rights Division [online](#) (</how-to/file-a-civil-rights-complaint>) or at 617-963-2917.

###

## Media Contact

**Jillian Fennimore**

### Phone

(617) 727-2543 (tel:6177272543)

### Online

[Jillian.Fennimore@mass.gov](mailto:Jillian.Fennimore@mass.gov) (mailto:Jillian.Fennimore@mass.gov)

**Office of Attorney General Maura Healey** (</orgs/office-of-attorney-general-maura-healey>)

Attorney General Maura Healey is the chief lawyer and law enforcement officer of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

**More** (</orgs/office-of-attorney-general-maura-healey>)



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# Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs)

If you are pregnant and looking to understand your abortion options, you should consult with a licensed reproductive healthcare provider.

**WARNING: CPCs do NOT provide comprehensive reproductive healthcare. CPCs are organizations that seek to prevent people from accessing abortion care.**

- CPCs may appear to be reproductive health care clinics, but do **NOT** provide abortion care or abortion referrals, contraception, or other reproductive health care, despite what they may advertise.
- Most CPCs are **NOT** licensed medical facilities.
- CPCs are **NOT** typically staffed by licensed doctors or nurses, even though some people who work at CPCs may try to look the part, for example, by wearing a white coat.
- Some CPCs offer ultrasounds performed by unlicensed personnel who are not qualified to provide that service, which may lead to inaccurate or misleading results about a pregnancy.
- CPCs staffed by unlicensed personnel are **NOT** required to keep your medical records private.
- Unlicensed CPCs are **NOT** required to follow codes of ethics or standards of care that govern healthcare professions because they are not healthcare providers.
- CPCs often provide inaccurate and misleading information about abortion and the medical and mental health effects of abortion.
- CPCs often mislead people about how far they are into their pregnancy.
- CPCs often try to delay scheduling appointments to push people beyond the point at which they can obtain an abortion.

**Do research and ask questions when scheduling an appointment to learn about your abortion options. Be aware of the warning signs.**

- Look at the website and online reviews before making an appointment.
- Ask whether the center is licensed and will provide you with an abortion or a referral for abortion before you go to an appointment.
- Watch for these warning signs, including that the center:
  - Is listed as a pregnancy resource center, pregnancy help center, pregnancy care center, or women's resource center on CPC websites such as [helpinyourarea.com/massachusetts](https://helpinyourarea.com/massachusetts).

- Advertises free pregnancy tests, abortion counseling, pre-abortion screenings, abortion education, but do not provide abortion or help you access abortion care elsewhere.
- Attempts to delay your appointment.
- Uses tactics to try to pressure you into continuing a pregnancy, for example, by providing small plastic fetus or baby clothes.
- For help finding a licensed reproductive healthcare provider, talk to your doctor or [check this list](#) (<https://abortioncarenewengland.org/providers>).
- When you arrive for your appointment, make sure you are in the right place. Many CPCs are located near clinics that provide abortion and use similar sounding names.

The Attorney General's Office is committed to securing the civil rights of all people in Massachusetts or traveling to Massachusetts to access healthcare. If you have concerns about your experience with a crisis pregnancy center, [file a complaint](#) ([/how-to/file-a-civil-rights-complaint](#)) with our Civil Rights Division online or at 617-963-2917.

## Share this information

We want all pregnant people seeking help to know that CPCs do not provide abortion care, and the information presented to you at these facilities about your options is often misleading and inaccurate. To help friends, family, neighbors, and others in your community recognize the warning signs of CPCs, the guidance above can be downloaded in multiple languages.

- [English](#) ([/doc/consumer-advisory-crisis-pregnancy-centers-english/download](#))
- [Español \(Spanish\)](#) ([/doc/aviso-al-consumidor-centros-de-crisis-de-embarazo-spanish/download](#))
- [Português \(Portuguese\)](#) ([/doc/aviso-ao-consumidor-centros-de-gravidez-em-crise-portuguese/download](#))
- [Kreyòl ayisyen \(Haitian Creole\)](#) ([/doc/avetisman-pou-kliyan-yo-sant-pou-fanm-ki-ansent-ki-an-difikilte-haitian-creole/download](#))
- [普通话 \(Mandarin\)](#) ([/doc/xiaofeizhegonggao-renshenweijichulizhongxin-mandarin/download](#))
- [Tiếng Việt \(Vietnamese\)](#) ([/doc/tu-van-nguoi-tieu-dung-trung-tam-ve-khung-hoang-mang-thai-vietnamese/download](#))



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