

PRESS RELEASE

# Healey-Driscoll Administration Issues Guidance for Pharmacies to Ensure Continued Access to Reproductive Health Medications

Guidance reaffirms Massachusetts' commitment to ensuring access to abortion across the Commonwealth

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
3/22/2023  
Department of Public Health

MEDIA CONTACT

## Ann Scales, Director of Media Relations

### Phone

(617) 624-5006 (tel:6176245006)

### Online

[Ann.Scales@State.MA.US](mailto:Ann.Scales@State.MA.US) (mailto:Ann.Scales@State.MA.US)

**BOSTON** — Today, the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Pharmacy (BORP) issued clarifying [guidance \(/files/documents/2023/03/22/Reproductive-Medication-Policy-3-2023.pdf\)](/files/documents/2023/03/22/Reproductive-Medication-Policy-3-2023.pdf) to all pharmacies in the Commonwealth that as an essential part of the healthcare system and under its regulatory obligations, all pharmacies and pharmacy departments are required to stock and/or procure all reproductive health medications, including Mifepristone (Mifeprex®), and dispense those medications pursuant to a valid prescription and/or order.

"Here in Massachusetts, we will always protect access to reproductive care, including abortion," said **Governor Maura T. Healey**. "At a time when states are rushing to ban medication abortion and some pharmacies are irresponsibly restricting access to it, we are reminding Massachusetts pharmacies that they have an obligation to provide critical reproductive health medications, including Mifepristone. It's safe, effective, and legal."

"The Commonwealth of Massachusetts recognizes access to abortion as a fundamental right and as a basic healthcare service which those in the healthcare system have an obligation to provide and support," said **Secretary of Health and Human Services Kate Walsh**. "We urge pharmacy providers nationwide to commit to making all reproductive health medications available based on state and federal laws."

"Our regulations require pharmacies to stock and/or procure all prescriptions necessary to meet the needs of the community, and we interpret that to include all reproductive health medications, including Mifepristone," said **Public Health Commissioner Margret Cooke**. "This is consistent with our standards as they relate to other basic though controversial medications, including naloxone."

Since the United States Supreme Court's June 2022 decision in *Dobbs*, millions of people who can become pregnant have lost access to abortion in their home states. This decision has allowed states to restrict abortion to the furthest extent possible, stripping access to basic and often life-saving healthcare. While Massachusetts remains steadfast in its support for abortion as a human right, we know that other states are making decisions that will ultimately result in increased maternal mortality and other ills of forced birth that will disparately impact poor women and women of color.

Twenty Attorneys General around the country have signed letters calling on pharmacies in their state to refuse to distribute Mifepristone, an FDA-approved and essential abortion medication, based on a restrictive interpretation of the law and misrepresentation of facts. Yielding to these coercive tactics will further strip pregnant people of their agency and rights and will violate the responsibility of pharmacies and pharmacy departments to provide critical healthcare services, including medications for abortion care.

The clarifying guidance to pharmacies was accompanied by a [statement](#)

</doc/public-health-commissioner-margret-r-cookes-statement-in-support-of-board-of-registration-in-pharmacy-policy-on-reproductive-health-medications-0/download> from Commissioner Cooke reaffirming the Commonwealth's commitment to ensuring access to abortion for all people throughout Massachusetts and urging pharmacy providers nationwide to adhere to their obligation to provide critical medications to patients, as determined by the individual's healthcare provider.

###

## Media Contact

### Ann Scales, Director of Media Relations

#### Phone

(617) 624-5006 (tel:6176245006)

#### Online

[Ann.Scales@State.MA.US](mailto:Ann.Scales@State.MA.US) (mailto:Ann.Scales@State.MA.US)

### Olivia James, Communications Manager

#### Phone

617-549-9658 (tel:6175499658)

### [Department of Public Health](/orgs/department-of-public-health) (/orgs/department-of-public-health)

DPH keeps people healthy and communities strong. We promote the health and well-being of all residents by ensuring access to high-quality public health and healthcare services, focusing on prevention and wellness, and health equity for all.

[More](/orgs/department-of-public-health) (/orgs/department-of-public-health)



[.\(\)](#)

[All Topics \(/topics/massachusetts-topics\)](#)

[Site Policies \(/site-policies\)](#)

[Public Records Requests \(/topics/public-records-requests\)](#)

© 2023 Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Mass.gov® is a registered service mark of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. [Mass.gov Privacy Policy \(/privacypolicy\)](#)