
SENATE BILL 5321

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senators Nobles, Bateman, Chapman, Cleveland, Dhingra, Frame, Harris, Hasegawa, Krishnadasan, Lovelett, Lovick, Orwall, Riccelli, Salomon, Slatter, Stanford, Trudeau, Valdez, and C. Wilson

Read first time 01/17/25. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to access at public postsecondary educational
2 institutions to medication abortion; and adding a new chapter to
3 Title 28B RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds and declares the
6 following:

7 (1) Access to abortion is a human right, an integral part of
8 essential health care, and vital for promoting public health.

9 (2) There are approximately 196,000 pregnancy capable students
10 attending Washington's public institutions of higher education and
11 many of these students need access to abortion services each year. A
12 central mission of Washington's student health centers serving these
13 institutions is to minimize the negative impact of health concerns on
14 students' studies and to facilitate retention and graduation.

15 (3) Students seeking pregnancy termination face substantial
16 travel, financial, and logistical barriers. Students must travel as
17 far as 78 miles, or over four hours on public transit, round trip to
18 the nearest abortion-providing facility, and the average wait time
19 for an appointment is 10 days. The supreme court *Dobbs v. Jackson*
20 *women's health organization* decision has increased the burden on
21 abortion-providing facilities in the state, meaning longer wait times

1 for students needing to access care. A 2024 report from senator Maria
2 Cantwell's office states that clinics in Oregon have already seen a
3 50 percent increase in patients from Washington state traveling for
4 abortion care, and the average wait times in Washington for abortion
5 appointments in a Seattle area clinic have already increased by one
6 week due to the influx of patients traveling from out of state. These
7 financial and time burdens negatively impact academic performance,
8 mental health, and physical health.

9 (4) Many of Washington's public institutions of higher education
10 have student health centers, but only two campuses with student
11 health centers are known to be in the process of implementing
12 abortion services. Medication abortion is extremely safe,
13 efficacious, and cost-effective. Research shows that the provision of
14 medication abortion in student health centers is safe, effective, and
15 feasible.

16 (5) Because medication abortion is recognized as a safe and
17 effective treatment for pregnancy termination and a health service
18 every pregnant person in the state has the legal right to choose, it
19 is the intent of the legislature that public institutions of higher
20 education make medication abortion as accessible and cost-effective
21 for students as possible.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
23 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
24 otherwise.

25 (1) "Council" means the Washington student achievement council as
26 defined in RCW 28B.77.010.

27 (2) "Medication abortion" has the same meaning as
28 "abortion medications" in RCW 69.41.050.

29 (3) "Public institution of higher education" or "public
30 institutions of higher education" means institutions of higher
31 education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

32 (4) "Student health center" means a clinic or health center
33 providing physical health care services to students operated by
34 public institutions of higher education.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) By the start of the 2026-27 academic
36 year, each student health center must offer access to medication
37 abortion, either through a public program that connects patients in
38 Washington to reproductive health services or through other delivery

1 methods. This service may be offered by providers at the student
2 health center or through telehealth services, or by providers
3 associated with a public program that connects patients in Washington
4 to reproductive health services.

5 (2) By the start of the 2026-27 academic year, each public
6 institution of higher education that does not operate a student
7 health center must provide information and referral services for
8 medication abortion to students seeking such services. The
9 institution must:

10 (a)(i) Provide referrals to qualified health care providers who
11 can lawfully administer medication abortion;

12 (ii) Referrals must include the contact information for at least
13 two qualified health care organizations, including telehealth
14 organizations;

15 (b) Offer private and accessible space on campus for the student
16 to participate in telehealth appointments upon a student's request
17 for telehealth accommodation;

18 (c) Offer any necessary technical support for students using
19 telehealth services, including reliable internet access; and

20 (d) Offer electronic devices to access telehealth services.

21 (3)(a) All institutions must maintain a comprehensive health
22 services website that provides clear, accessible information and
23 resources regarding reproductive health services including, but not
24 limited to, prenatal care and options for pregnancy termination.

25 (b) The website must include:

26 (i) Detailed instructions for scheduling appointments, with
27 contact information for both pregnancy-related services and
28 behavioral health services; and

29 (ii) Links and contact information for campus resources that
30 assist students in requesting academic accommodations, including
31 absences, rescheduling exams, or adjusting other academic
32 requirements due to pregnancy, recovery from medical treatment, or
33 related conditions.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 through 3 of this act
35 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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