



VIOLENCE FREE
MINNESOTA

Statement on Overturning of Roe v. Wade

June 24, 2022

As the statewide coalition to end relationship abuse, Violence Free Minnesota is outraged and dismayed by the Supreme Court overturning Roe v. Wade. As a long-standing pro-choice organization, we believe reproductive healthcare, abortion, and bodily autonomy are all fundamental human rights and everyone should have access to safe and affordable reproductive healthcare and abortion care.

Access to safe abortions is a matter of safety for victim/survivors of intimate partner violence. By overturning Roe v. Wade, many states will now deprive survivors of their reproductive freedom, severely impacting their health and well-being. We know that pregnancy increases a person's vulnerability to intimate partner violence. Forcing someone to carry a pregnancy to term often binds them to their abuser, and puts them at risk for further abuse. Victim/survivors—and all people—deserve to be safe and have access to the full spectrum of accessible and affordable reproductive healthcare, including abortion.

Intimate partner violence is rooted in power and control. Reproductive coercion is a form of abuse by which a current or former intimate partner maintains power and control over a victim/survivor's reproductive health and choices. This form of abuse is intricately linked to the need for abortion care, as such behaviors can include coercing or forcing someone into pregnancy through violence, threats, and/or birth control sabotage. Abusers often use these tactics as a means to keep their pregnant partners dependent and unable to leave the relationship. Ultimately, reproductive coercion undermines victim/survivors' reproductive autonomy and increases the need for reproductive healthcare.

Unfortunately, reproductive justice and freedom has not been a reality for many communities in our country. The Black, Brown, Indigenous, and LGBTQ+ communities face higher rates of intimate partner violence and reproductive coercion. Throughout this country's history, the state has used force and policy to control the reproductive outcomes of the most vulnerable communities. For decades in the 19th and 20th centuries, Black and Indigenous peoples were forcibly sterilized through state and national policies. In recent years, immigrants fleeing violence were coercively sterilized or forced to have abortions while detained at ICE facilities. Additionally, LGBTQ+ communities are often forgotten and left out of conversations and policies surrounding reproductive justice. These communities also face high rates of economic marginalization that severely limits their access to reproductive healthcare and abortion. The Supreme Court decision will only exacerbate the barriers that people of color and LGBTQ+ peoples already face in terms of reproductive justice.

If we want to create a world free from violence, we must eliminate it in all its forms, whether that be interpersonal or systemic. While abortion is currently a constitutional right in Minnesota, this is not the case for the majority of the country. We will continue to advocate for reproductive justice and abortion rights for everyone.

Reproductive justice organizations and abortion providers need our support now more than ever. If you have the ability to do so, please donate to an organization or provider. Also, familiarize yourself with options such as Plan C (medical abortion) and how to support abortion funds that help provide access for those who cannot afford an abortion or to travel to a state if they cannot access one where they live. You can find who and where to donate here:

vfmn.org/repro-justice-donations.