



The Right to Abortion in Armenia

Fact Sheet

This factsheet has been prepared by the Advocacy and Policy Development Team of the Women's Resource Center NGO. It is intended for representatives of government bodies and civil society organizations engaged in advocacy in this area, including those involved in legislative initiatives. The document is grounded in a rights-based and evidence-informed approach.

Abortion Legislation in Armenia

According to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Human Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights” (hereinafter, “the Law”), every woman in Armenia has the right to access abortion services. Abortion is available up to 11 weeks and 7 days of pregnancy upon the woman’s written request. From the 12th to the 22nd week of pregnancy, abortion is permitted with the woman’s consent only in cases where specific medical or social indications are present, as defined by a decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. The recognized social indications for the termination of pregnancy include: the death of the husband during the pregnancy; the lawful imprisonment of either spouse; a legally registered divorce during the pregnancy; and pregnancy resulting from rape.

In 2024, significant legislative amendments were introduced, allowing medical abortion for pregnancies of up to 8 weeks to be provided not only in hospital settings but also on an outpatient basis, including in medical facilities licensed to deliver obstetric and gynecological care. This represents an important step forward in improving access to medical abortion.

Surgical abortion, as well as medical abortion between 8 and 22 weeks of pregnancy, may be performed only in hospital settings, within medical institutions licensed to provide obstetric and gynecological services.

Termination of pregnancy for a person under the age of 16 is carried out upon their request, with the written consent of their legal representative. In the absence of such a representative, consent may be provided by an authorized contact person. The management of the medical facility is required to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child’s right to freely express their views is respected, that they are heard, and that due weight is given to their views in accordance with their age and level of maturity.

Discriminatory Legislation and Practices and the Right to Abortion

Although abortion on request is legal in Armenia, various regulatory and social factors continue to affect access to abortion services. For example, the introduction of a mandatory three-day waiting period in 2016, while not significantly influencing a woman’s decision to have an abortion, creates a substantial barrier to timely access. Under this regulation, any woman seeking abortion services with her consent must first observe the legally prescribed waiting period.

The World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines on safe abortion clearly state that mandatory waiting periods have no medical justification. Such requirements undermine a woman’s autonomy and delay access to a legally available abortion. This requirement can also impose additional financial costs, as women frequently need to travel long distances to reach a medical facility. Consequently, women living in rural areas are disproportionately affected.

Another problematic aspect of the legislation is the mandatory pre-abortion counselling. Under the Law, immediately prior to performing a medical abortion, the doctor is required to provide the woman with free counselling on the potential negative consequences of the procedure. It is essential that such counselling be neutral, respect the woman’s autonomy, safeguard her freedom to make decisions, and ensure confidentiality. WHO emphasizes that counselling should be non-directive, fact-based, confidential, and supportive, enabling women to make informed and voluntary decisions. WHO further notes that counselling should never be a prerequisite for accessing abortion services.

The cost of abortion services also presents a significant barrier to access. In Armenia, abortion on request incurs a fee, which varies between medical facilities and ranges from 30,000 to 150,000 AMD. Abortion services are provided free of charge in cases of medical or social indications. They are also free on request for women who belong to socially vulnerable groups entitled to state-guaranteed free or preferential medical care. However, abortion on request is not included among services reimbursed under the Universal Health Insurance scheme.

Another significant barrier is the stigma surrounding abortion and the refusal of some doctors to provide services. In Armenia, abortion stigma is prevalent among healthcare providers, and many women may experience shaming during pre-abortion consultations. Some doctors may raise religious or moral considerations in the presence of the woman, or even refuse to provide the procedure. Such practices contribute to women seeking unsafe alternatives to terminate their pregnancies.



Recommendations

- Remove the mandatory three-day waiting period from the law and amend the legislation to ensure that compulsory or biased counselling is not required for abortion services.
- Include abortion services on a woman's request in the list of services covered by the Universal Health Insurance scheme.
- Provide regular and ongoing training for healthcare providers on abortion access, the elimination of stigma, and the delivery of services in confidential and private settings.
- Conduct awareness sessions in women's consultation clinics for different groups of women on abortion methods and other family planning options, utilising available resources effectively.

For more detailed information on the situation of abortion in Armenia, see the report ["Abortion in Armenia: Legislation and Practice"](#), prepared by the Women's Resource Center NGO, 2025.