



The State of Abortion Laws in Virginia

What did the U.S. Supreme Court decide?

Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization overturned *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*.

Which means...

- There is NO federal constitutional "right" to abortion.
- The power is restored to the people and their elected representatives to protect the dignity and rights of the human person from the moment of conception by enacting life-affirming laws in their states and in Congress.
- While some states have already implemented total or near total limits on abortion, more than half of states – including Virginia – have few or no limits on abortion.

What are the current abortion laws in Virginia?

Virginia has very few limits on abortion:

- **1st trimester:** No limits, and even certain non-physicians may perform the abortion.
- **2nd trimester:** No limits, except that the abortion must be performed in a hospital by a physician.
- **3rd trimester:** The abortion must be performed in a hospital by a physician, and the physician and two consulting physicians must certify that "the continuation of the pregnancy is likely to result in the death of the woman or substantially and irremediably impair the mental or physical health of the woman." The broad "mental health" language makes this requirement largely ineffective.

Virginia also has a ban on partial-birth abortion and, subject to exceptions that can be granted only through a judicial process, requires parental consent for minors to obtain an abortion.

What can YOU do to protect preborn children?

- Pray, fast and offer sacrifice for the conversion of minds and hearts.
- Advocate for pro-life laws by contacting your legislators and joining the Virginia Catholic Conference advocacy network (visit www.vacatholic.org and click "Join us!").
- Support initiatives that ensure compassionate care and support for children both before and after their birth, and for their mothers and families. To learn more about all the services provided by the Catholic dioceses in Virginia visit www.vacatholic.org/resources and click "Diocesan-Affiliated Pregnancy Resources in Virginia."
- Learn how you can offer care and support for those suffering after abortion (same link as above).