

## PRESS RELEASE

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### CONTACT

Sarah MacDonald: smacdonald@legalvoice.org, 206-682-9552 x107, 208-249-1253



### **King County Board of Health Passes Ordinance Addressing Crisis Pregnancy Centers** *Board calls crisis pregnancy centers' lack of transparency a threat to public health; requires posted notice that centers are not health care facilities*

Seattle, Wash. – This afternoon, the King County Board of Health passed an ordinance requiring pregnancy centers that are not medically licensed to post a notice that reads: **“This facility is not a health care facility.”** The sign is to be prominently displayed, and translated into the ten most prevalent languages in King County. The ordinance also requires this notice to appear conspicuously in all print and digital advertising materials.

Limited service pregnancy centers, referred to as “crisis pregnancy centers,” are nonprofit organizations whose express purpose is to discourage abortions and promote childbirth. These centers typically provide limited, non-medical counseling to pregnant people, pregnancy tests, and ultrasounds without medical diagnosis.

Crisis pregnancy centers frequently use strategic advertising to target people seeking free assistance when facing an unintended pregnancy, many of whom are young, low-income, and uninsured. Most or all of these centers expressly oppose contraception and abortion, and do not provide visitors with information—or purposefully provide them with medically inaccurate information—about sexual health and reproductive health care.

“All people facing an unintended pregnancy deserve medically accurate, comprehensive health care. This is especially true for people who are young, low-income, or uninsured, who already face denials of their self-determination in so many contexts,” said **Sara Ainsworth, Advocacy Director for Legal Voice**. “We applaud the Board of Health’s action today, and hope the Board will continue to work to ensure that no one is denied access to health care by misinformation and deceptive practices.”

In its proposal for this ordinance, the Board of Health recognized the public health threat associated with crisis pregnancy centers and the propagation of misinformation: “It is vital that pregnant women in King County know when they are receiving care from health care facilities, as delay in accessing that care resulting from lack of information or misinformation could permanently alter the reproductive decisions available to them and the adequacy of their prenatal care.”

**Legal Voice’s Sara Ainsworth is available for further comment** on this ordinance and on the organization’s continued efforts to ensure safe, equitable, and medically accurate health care access for all.

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*Legal Voice is a progressive feminist organization using the power of the law to make positive change for women and girls in the Northwest. Legal Voice uses ground-breaking litigation, legislative advocacy, and community education to fight gender oppression and injustice in the legal system. More at [legalvoice.org](http://legalvoice.org).*

*Women’s rights. Nothing less.*

907 Pine Street  
Suite 500  
Seattle, WA 98101

T 206-682-9552  
F 206-682-9556

[LegalVoice.org](http://LegalVoice.org)