

# Know Before You Go

## Crisis pregnancy centers want you to stay pregnant.



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If you are pregnant and have questions, you deserve medically accurate information about all your options. You can get that information and the care you need at a real clinic, but you will not get that at a crisis pregnancy center.

### What are crisis pregnancy centers?

Crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) are fake clinics that exist to keep people from accessing abortion care. They set themselves up to look like real health clinics – their websites, advertising, and office spaces look the same as real clinics; staff wear white coats and scrubs: they may even use the word “clinic” in their names – but **most CPCs provide no medical care whatsoever**. They are religious, anti-abortion organizations that spread dangerously false information about abortion, birth control, and sexually transmitted infections. If they do offer real medical services, those services are limited to an anti-choice, anti-abortion agenda only.

For more about crisis pregnancy centers, see [Designed to Deceive: A Study of the Crisis Pregnancy Center Industry in 9 States](#). Also see [#ExposeFakeClinics](#) for more resources and to connect with advocacy efforts, like submitting online reviews and spreading the word. For information specific to Idaho, see [Crisis Pregnancy Centers: Idaho](#).

### Why should I avoid crisis pregnancy centers?

- **They are deceptive and misleading:** CPCs target pregnant people of color and pregnant people with lower incomes with deceptive marketing; provide few or no real medical services; and mislead clients about services, potentially resulting in delayed care and unnecessary risks to health. See *Designed to Deceive: A Study of the Crisis Pregnancy Center Industry in 9 States*.<sup>1</sup>
- **Health concerns:** They rarely offer complete, medically accurate information. They may offer ultrasounds (sonogram) but most have no medical professionals on staff to look at the results. This could be very dangerous if in fact there is something seriously wrong. Many also offer an experimental “treatment” they call “abortion pill reversal” that the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists rejects as unsafe and not based in science.<sup>2</sup>
- **Privacy risks:** With *Roe v. Wade* overturned, abortion is or will soon be illegal in many states. Unlike real medical clinics, CPCs do not have to keep your personal health information confidential. Investigations revealed<sup>3</sup> that fake clinics store client data in an anti-abortion movement platform to help further restrict access to abortion and reproductive health services. The personal information gathered by CPCs could be used as evidence in civil or criminal cases against people who get abortions, those who help them, and healthcare providers.

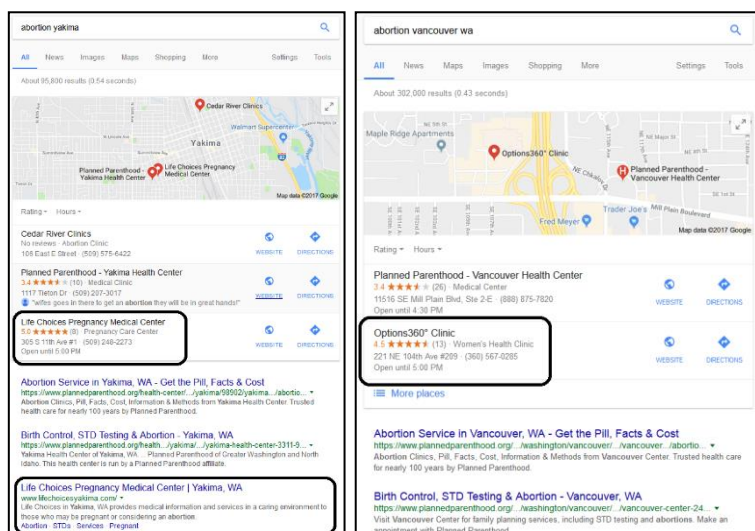
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<sup>1</sup> [www.legalvoice.org/post/designed-to-deceive-a-study-of-the-crisis-pregnancy-center-industry-in-9-states](http://www.legalvoice.org/post/designed-to-deceive-a-study-of-the-crisis-pregnancy-center-industry-in-9-states)

## How can I spot a crisis pregnancy center?

Look for the words “pregnancy options,” “pregnancy resource center,” or “pregnancy care center” in your search results, on advertisements, and on their signage. Here are examples of what you might see in online search results. The CPCs are circled.

To find a real reproductive healthcare clinic, see “How do I find the help I need?” below.



## But they offer free pregnancy tests and I need one.

You may be looking for pregnancy verification to apply for state funding for your abortion. YOU DO NOT need to do this. Abortion providers will give you a free pregnancy test at your appointment. You will not have to pay for it.

If you need a free pregnancy test for another reason, contact a community health clinic or family planning clinic. They can help you get a free pregnancy test. For example:

- King County Public Health free pregnancy testing: [www.kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dph/health-safety/health-centers-programs-services/birth-control-sexual-health/pregnancy-testing](http://www.kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dph/health-safety/health-centers-programs-services/birth-control-sexual-health/pregnancy-testing)
- Other Washington providers, search here for “Pregnancy Testing”: <http://resources.helpmegrowwa.org/>

## What will I find at a real abortion clinic?

Abortion clinics are health care facilities with trained medical care providers on staff. Internet listings and advertisements will use words like “abortion clinic,” “abortion provider,” and “family planning services” (though beware of CPCs that put those words on their internet listings and ads). Real abortion clinics provide:

- Medical and surgical abortions,
- Counseling about *all* options including parenthood, adoption, or abortion,
- Birth control services (emergency contraception, pills, implants, injections, IUDs, etc.),
- Lab tests for pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and other conditions,
- Medical treatment of sexually transmitted infections and other conditions,
- Referrals to prenatal or specialty care,

<sup>2</sup> [www.acog.org/advocacy/facts-are-important/medication-abortion-reversal-is-not-supported-by-science](http://www.acog.org/advocacy/facts-are-important/medication-abortion-reversal-is-not-supported-by-science)

<sup>3</sup> [www.womenslawproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Alliance\\_CPC\\_Report\\_Feb2022\\_UrgentBrief2-10-22.pdf](http://www.womenslawproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Alliance_CPC_Report_Feb2022_UrgentBrief2-10-22.pdf)

- State-licensed physicians and nurse practitioners to provide services,
- State-licensed providers to interpret ultrasounds, and
- Test results without unnecessary delay.

## How do I find the help I need?

There are referral services that can direct you to reproductive health clinics (also called family planning clinics or women's health clinics) near you that provide abortion and birth control.

- **AbortionFinder:** A directory of trusted, verified abortion service providers in the United States. Also shares what to expect from a medication abortion versus an in-clinic abortion.  
[www.abortionfinder.org](http://www.abortionfinder.org)
- **All Options:** Operates a toll-free talkline to provide judgment-free support for pregnancy options, pregnancy loss, abortion, adoption, parenting, infertility, or other reproductive decisions and experiences.  
1-888-493-0092 / [www.all-options.org/find-support/](http://www.all-options.org/find-support/)
- **Northwest Abortion Access Fund:** Provides referrals, fundraising counseling, and financial help to pay for abortions and related travel.  
1-866-NWAAF10 (1-866-692-2310) / [www.nwaafund.org](http://www.nwaafund.org)
- **Repro Legal Helpline:** Free, confidential helpline where you can get legal information or advice about self-managed abortion, young people's access to abortion or judicial bypass, and referrals to local resources. Run by If/When/How.  
1-844-868-2812 / [www.reprolegalhelpline.org](http://www.reprolegalhelpline.org)

If you are in financial need, you can apply for state medical coverage for an abortion or prenatal care. Go to [www.washingtonconnection.org](http://www.washingtonconnection.org). You do not need to show a doctor's note that you are pregnant to get this coverage; all you need to do is say that you took either a home or medical pregnancy test and it was positive.

For more information about your reproductive rights in Washington State, see our Health & Reproductive Rights publications at [www.legalvoice.org/resources/](http://www.legalvoice.org/resources/).

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This publication provides general information concerning your rights and responsibilities. It is not intended as a substitute for specific legal or medical advice. This information is current as of November 2023.

*Updated by Alizeh Bhojani and Chloë Phalan 11/20/23.*

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