

Preventing Pregnancy for Victims of Sexual Assault

HB 220 by Rep. Claudia Ordaz
SB 1899 by Senator Joan Huffman

Requires that all healthcare facilities providing sexual assault forensic exams offer Emergency Contraception (EC) to rape victims.

What is EC, and how does it work?

Emergency Contraception (EC) is a method of pregnancy prevention. EC is not an abortion pill, it does not harm or end a pregnancy, it works by preventing a woman's body from ovulating and releasing an egg. EC is only effective up to 120 hours after the unprotected sexual encounter occurs.

Why is EC access important for rape victims?

Access to EC is crucial for rape victims because it provides them with the ability to prevent an unwanted pregnancy following a sexual assault. Victims need to be provided EC as soon as possible following their attack, because the window of effectiveness is short. EC must be taken within 5 days to prevent pregnancy. It also becomes less effective over time - meaning the sooner a victim uses it, the better chance it has of preventing a pregnancy from occurring.

Why does Texas need this bill?

The state of Texas outlines minimum standards of care that must be provided to sexual assault victims during a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam. In 2022, the Office of the Attorney General updated the Texas Evidence Collection Protocol to outline the entire exam process in detail for healthcare providers, organizations, advocates, and the public. In the protocol, they include offering emergency contraception with informed consent as a recommendation to victims of sexual assault. This bill seeks to codify that recommendation into law and ensure needed protections for vulnerable women.

Who are we?

The Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition (TWHC) is a partnership of 77 healthcare, faith, and community-based member organizations dedicated to improving the health and well-being of Texas women, babies, and families. We work to ensure access to preventive and preconception care - including health screenings and contraception - for all Texas women.

The Texas Association Against Sexual Assault is the statewide sexual assault coalition comprised of Rape Crisis Centers in Texas.



Texas Women's
Healthcare Coalition

REFERENCES

1 "Morning After Pill." The Cleveland Clinic, 21 Nov. 2024,
<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/23386-morning-after-pill#overview>

2 "Emergency Contraception - US SPR." CDC Contraceptive Guidance for Health Care Providers, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 27 Mar. 2023,
www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/contraception/mmwr/spr/emergency.html.

