



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**CITY COUNCIL PASSES BODILY AUTONOMY FOR ALL ORDINANCE TO FURTHER
PROTECT THOSE SEEKING REPRODUCTIVE OR GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE
FROM DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION**

This Ordinance will prohibit employers and landlords from discriminating or retaliating against individuals for receiving reproductive or gender-affirming health care

CHICAGO — Today, City Council passed the Bodily Autonomy For All ordinance introduced by Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, Alderwoman Maria Hadden (49th Ward), Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35th Ward), Alderwoman Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez (33rd Ward), and Alderman Matt Martin (47th Ward) in December. Under this law, landlords and employers alike cannot discriminate or retaliate against an individual who has received reproductive healthcare or gender-affirming care. Nor can they discriminate or retaliate if a family member of the individual has sought similar care. Further, the ordinance prohibits employers from accessing a worker's personal health information on reproductive health care or gender-affirming care without their affirmative written consent to further protect against discrimination or retaliation.

"Ever since the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision by the Supreme Court was leaked, my administration, in collaboration with abortion advocates and community partners, have used every tool at our disposal to deepen protections for individuals seeking gender-affirming and reproductive health care," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Today, City Council has added to that toolbox by passing a major ordinance to further prevent discrimination and retaliation against those seeking care — this time in the context of housing and employment. This ordinance represents our continued, citywide commitment to doing everything in our power to keep individuals safe and protect their right to bodily autonomy."

These protections are critical as the deterioration of the fundamental right to bodily autonomy across the country persists. This ordinance builds off the initial Bodily Autonomy ordinance passed by City Council in September 2021, which prohibits any City department or agency from participating in any investigation or proceeding



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related to reproductive and gender-affirming care led by another jurisdiction, including anti-abortion states.

The Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR) has jurisdiction over investigating complaints of discrimination or retaliation in the context of housing and shares joint jurisdiction with the Office of Labor Standards at the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) for complaints related to discrimination or retaliation in the workplace.

“I applaud Mayor Lightfoot and the City Council for making the issue of bodily autonomy a priority. Through this ordinance, the City will ensure that no one is made a victim for exercising their rights to make decisions regarding their reproductive health care and gender-affirming care. The Commission on Human Relations is ready to help in the enforcement of this important legislation and will exercise our full authority to prevent anyone from being subject to discrimination in our city,” said Nancy Andrade, Commissioner for the Chicago Commission on Human Relations.

Throughout last year, Mayor Lightfoot has doubled down on her commitment to protecting the fundamental right to reproductive healthcare.

In May 2022, Mayor Lightfoot announced the [*Justice for All Pledge*](#), which commits to protecting and creating fair access to reproductive, obstetric and gynecological care, and related resources that enhance and facilitate everyone’s ability to thrive. Mayor Lightfoot backed the pledge with an initial \$500,000 investment to support providers that assist patients seeking abortions through lodging, transportation, and follow-up care. These funds have supported the work of the Chicago Abortion Fund and Planned Parenthood of Illinois in 2022. Through the 2023 City budget, the Chicago Department of Public Health budgeted an additional \$1.5M to support services for those seeking reproductive healthcare. The protections introduced today in the Bodily Autonomy For All ordinance reinforce that commitment and emphasize that the City will do everything in its power to ensure individuals remain safe and free from discrimination during and after seeking critical medical care in Chicago.

“The City of Chicago has established and enforced a wide-range of critical worker protections, making Chicago one of the most worker-friendly cities in the country,” said Kenneth J. Meyer, Commissioner, Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP). “This amended ordinance protects workers’ rights to exercise their choices related to gender-affirming care and bodily autonomy. Through the enforcement authority of the BACP Office of Labor Standards, workers will be protected from discrimination and retaliation in the workplace.”



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“Planned Parenthood of Illinois applauds the Chicago City Council for passing an updated Bodily Autonomy Ordinance. Every person should have the fundamental right to make their own health care decisions without fear of intimidation, retaliation, harassment, or being denied care. As one of the largest providers of reproductive and gender-affirming care in the city, this Ordinance sends the clear message that no matter where a person lives, what they look like, who they love, or how much money they make, everyone should have the freedom to decide what is best for themselves and their families when it comes to reproductive health care including abortion and gender-affirming care,” said Jennifer Welch, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Illinois.

“The passage of the Bodily Autonomy Ordinance demonstrates our commitment to ensure everyone who is seeking reproductive health care and gender-affirming care can have access to the tools and protection they need,” said Alderwoman Maria Hadden, 49th Ward. “I am proud of the hard work we have done to protect individuals who need this protection the most, and we will continue to do the best to ensure everyone is free of discrimination and retaliation.”

“As a city, we pride ourselves on our progress and commitment to making Chicago a place where everyone can thrive, including creating pathways to safe reproductive healthcare, and gender-affirming care without retaliation or discrimination from others. The work we have done to pass this ordinance is not a victory lap but a step to expand the protection of everyone who needs support,” said Alderman Matt Martin, 47th Ward.

“The passage of the Bodily Autonomy For All ordinance is a necessary step toward ensuring that our siblings seeking protection from discrimination — based on their need for reproductive health care or gender-affirming care — can access needed resources. Our work as alderpeople is to deliver resources and keep Chicagoans safe. I applaud the work of my colleagues and Mayor Lightfoot to expand bodily autonomy protections to every resident in need,” said Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, 35th Ward.

“We promised a Sanctuary City for bodily autonomy with the strongest possible protections, this is another step in the journey to get to that place. We are working together as a city government, hand in hand with advocacy organizations, to ensure we develop all the policies to make Chicago a sanctuary for our bodies. I’m excited to continue doing this work alongside our partners.” said Alderwoman Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez, 33rd Ward.



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Though federal protections for abortions were dissolved with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, abortion is still legal in Illinois and available in Chicago. Many states had passed new laws that banned abortion when *Roe v. Wade* was struck down. Illinois has a law that keeps abortion legal, the Reproductive Health Act, which was signed into law by Governor JB Pritzker in 2019.

To learn more about services and resources available for those seeking reproductive healthcare, visit [Chicago.gov/abortioncare](https://chicago.gov/abortioncare).

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