



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES A 'JUSTICE FOR ALL PLEDGE' CENTERING ON EQUITY AND ACCESS

The pledge is supported by a \$500,000 investment from the Chicago Department of Public Health, which will support transportation; lodging; safe and necessary reproductive, obstetric, and gynecological care; and follow up services

CHICAGO — Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot joined reproductive justice leaders to announce the *Justice For All Pledge*, in response to the leaked draft opinion by the majority of the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS), doubling down on her commitments to create a safe and equitable city for all. This pledge signals that the City will continue to be a safe haven for all who are unjustly denied the resources and opportunities they deserve; to fight for the rights of all people; and to ensure that no person will be attacked, assaulted, bullied, or discriminated against because of who they are, the choices they make regarding their bodily autonomy, or who they love.

Therefore, today, the City of Chicago introduces the *Justice For All Pledge*:

“Justice and freedom are core tenets of our American democracy, and as public and private institutions we have a responsibility to protect and advance justice and freedom in partnership with the communities we serve. We pledge to protect and create fair access to opportunities and resources that enhance and facilitate everyone’s ability to thrive. This means we must create and maintain in Chicago a safe haven for all who are unjustly denied the rights, privileges, immunities, resources and opportunities they deserve as human beings and residents of our city and country.

1. Fight for the rights of all people regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, or sexual orientation. We will fight to ensure that no person will be attacked, assaulted, bullied, or discriminated against because of who they are, the choices they make regarding their bodily autonomy, or who they love;
2. Protect and increase access for all safe reproductive, obstetric, and gynecological healthcare regardless of the patient’s age, sex, gender identity,



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



- race, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, place of residence, or immigration status in order to support the choices of all people to have or not bear children on their terms;
3. Build capacity for anti-racist leadership, reckon with the impacts of racism and protect and advance justice in partnership with the communities that we serve;
 4. Create safe environments to support and directly address the racial and health disparities experienced by people of color, specifically the rates of maternal and infant mortality experienced by Black women in Chicago; and
 5. Support and affirm a search for the truth and free expression that does not propagate hate or erase anyone from our history and our present-day fight for justice.

In addition to the pledge, Mayor Lightfoot and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) announced an investment of \$500,000 as part of their maternal and reproductive health work. These funds will support access to reproductive healthcare for Chicagoans and patients seeking safe, legal care from neighboring states that have or ultimately will ban abortion if the Supreme Court decides to strike down *Roe v. Wade*, as outlined in the leaked decision.

“Through this investment, my administration is reaffirming our commitment to ensure safe access for anyone seeking safe reproductive healthcare. That includes access to transportation, lodging, care, and, if necessary, safe and legal access to an abortion procedure,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “All people, regardless of race, sex, age, income, or immigration status deserve to have access to healthcare, and that includes reproductive rights and the choice to decide over their own bodies.”

Mayor Lightfoot called on the philanthropic and business communities to support the scaling up of the critically important reproductive health safety net in Chicago for all those in need, both here in the city and across the country. She also called for other cities to join her in taking the *Justice For All Pledge*.

In addition to this investment, CDPH funds a multitude of services to support individuals in their health and safety regarding reproductive and maternal health. This includes the Family Connects program, which currently provides services to all new parents at four Chicago hospitals, with plans to expand to all new parents at every obstetric hospital in Chicago over the next year, using additional funding from the Chicago Recovery Plan. Through this program, nurses support new parents and assess future pregnancy intention via a patient-centered approach. Nurses provide birth control education and counseling based on a post-partum individual’s choice.



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



CDPH also funds the Chicago Healthy Adolescents and Teens (CHAT) program, the City's school-based sexual health education, and the STI screening initiative for adolescents aged 13-24. Through a delegate agency, Planned Parenthood of Illinois, students are provided with sexual health education, a confidential chlamydia/gonorrhea test (urine screening), a private one-on-one meeting with a health educator, and linkage to a comprehensive range of reproductive health services. In 2021 alone, the program served over 8,000 students. Chicago's teen birth rates have fallen significantly in recent decades; though, racial, ethnic, and geographical disparities persist. The majority of teen pregnancies are unintended, highlighting the important issue of access to reproductive care and education.

"Women's health care is a right that should be guaranteed, and it is a matter of public health. Prior to the legalization of abortion, tens of thousands of women wound up in emergency rooms every year from botched, illegal abortions. Not all of them survived," said Chicago Department of Public Health Commissioner Allison Arwady, M.D. "We must never go back to that time. As a physician, I oppose creating barriers to care, and I'm proud that Chicago will continue to value access to women's healthcare."

"We are outraged by the draft Supreme Court majority opinion written by Justice Alito which explicitly overturns Roe v. Wade and dismantles the legal underpinnings of our fundamental rights and protections. Women cannot be free unless they are able to control their own bodies and their own reproductive health. Investments like these are critical to ensure access to safe reproductive healthcare for any and all who need it. We applaud and support Mayor Lightfoot for this investment and for her commitment to making Chicago a beacon and leader for reproductive justice," said Jackie Kaplan-Perkins, Chair of the Mayor's Women's Advisory Council.

"As a practical support organization, Midwest Access Coalition has been arranging and funding travel and accommodations for thousands of people needing short and long-distance travel support to Chicago since 2015," said Diana Parker-Kafka, Executive Director of Midwest Access Coalition. "We applaud the Mayor for investing to ensure bodily autonomy remains an accessible right for all, and we are honored to help in supporting her efforts."

"Reproductive Justice is so much more than access to birth control and abortion," said Felicia Davis Blakley, Chicago Foundation for Women President and CEO. "Significant investments in reproductive health are critical to addressing the severe healthcare disparities that disproportionately plague women, especially women of color, trans, and gender nonbinary individuals across Chicago."



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



"We are proud to say that abortion is still safe and legal in Illinois and will remain legal in Illinois even when the Supreme Court officially overturns Roe v. Wade, as the leaked draft decision showed they are poised to do. Planned Parenthood of Illinois is working to ensure that every patient, no matter where they live, has access to the essential health care they need and deserve, including abortion. But we can't do it alone, and we appreciate the City of Chicago's commitment to supporting providers in this time of growing crisis," said Jennifer Welch, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Illinois.

"In the wake of the leaked draft opinion, which if final, shows that the Supreme Court will overturn the fundamental right to abortion in this country, we are thankful we have local leaders take meaningful steps for abortion access by dedicating resources to the Chicago Abortion Fund (CAF)," said Qudsiyyah Shariyf, Deputy Director of CAF. "With anti-abortion politicians passing more and more laws that ban and restrict abortion across the Midwest, this investment will allow organizations like CAF to continue to serve our community and ensure abortion is there for everyone who needs it, no matter who they are, where they live, or how much they earn."

If someone is seeking support and services, the [OneChiFam website](#) provides trusted resources and information about sexual and reproductive health and includes an Online Resource [Finder](#). CDPH hosts a digital community directory as part of its OneChiFam resource page. Anyone can use this directory to search by zip code, category, or keyword.

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