

## Statement: Implications of Restricting Access to Abortion

The Population Association of America and Association of Population Centers have not issued an official position on the legal, ethical, or moral implications of abortion. However, as scientists, we encourage policymakers to consider the strong evidence revealed by decades of research, which strongly demonstrates that restricting access to the full range of reproductive services, including contraception and abortion, will adversely and disproportionately impact the health and well-being of people and their families in the United States.

Population scientists, including demographers, economists, and sociologists, conduct scientific research to understand population change's individual, societal, and environmental implications. The field encompasses diverse expertise, including reproductive and maternal health—in which population scientists analyze how a variety of factors, including public policy, affect the health and well-being of people and their families in the United States and abroad. An extensive body of research based on studies using a variety of methodologies, including [prospective](#) longitudinal studies, has examined the underlying causes of unwanted pregnancy and the short-and long-term physical, mental, and financial effects.

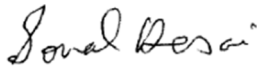
Population scientists have documented how changes in public policy affect access to reproductive health services and, in turn, [influence the rate of abortions](#) and [when abortions occur during pregnancy](#). Specifically, their research has found that restricting access to abortions does not reduce the need for abortions and has financial, emotional, and health consequences, whereas expanding coverage of contraception is associated with decreases in early parenthood and abortion rates.

Some of the critical results show:

- People who are [denied](#) an abortion and carry an unwanted pregnancy to term have four times greater odds of living below the Federal Poverty Level and are more likely to experience poor physical health during and following pregnancy. Research also finds that being denied abortion has serious implications for the children born of unwanted pregnancy and for existing children in the family.
- Pregnancies among teens and young adults are often unwanted, in part because relationships during these years can be volatile and unstable. Demographic research documents the disturbing role that intimate partner violence, including reproductive coercion and contraceptive sabotage, plays in [contraceptive use](#) and [early pregnancies](#).
- [People of color, especially Black, Latinx, and Indigenous people, have lower access to contraception](#) and reproductive health care, higher rates of pregnancies they do not want to continue, higher rates of abortion, and disproportionately [higher increases in maternal mortality](#) than White people. Abortion bans will [disproportionately harm communities of color](#).

- Enhancing access to contraception, particularly for young people, is important in reducing unplanned pregnancies. Notably, [the Guttmacher Institute](#) finds that the abortion rate is lower than it was before abortion was legalized nationally in 1973. Studies have attributed this, in part, to the increased availability of long-lasting reversible contraception through the [Affordable Care Act](#).
- Research on [abortion legalization](#) documents increases in educational attainment and improvements in employment outcomes and earnings. These effects are particularly large for Black women.

In summary, a large body of evidence shows that the financial, emotional, and health and wellbeing of people and their families is worse off when reproductive services, such as abortion, are restricted.



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