

Traveling for Care: Abortion in the United States

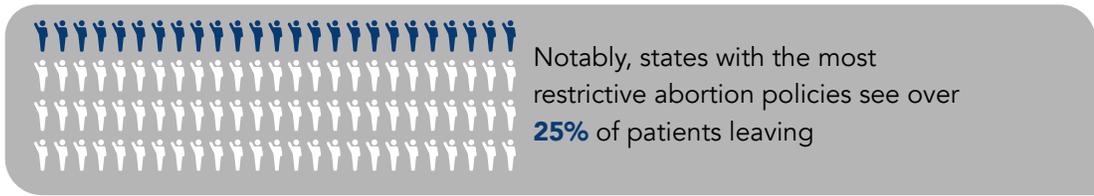
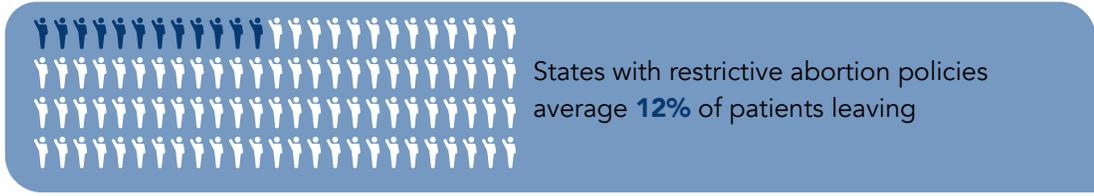
[Read the article here](#)

Mikaela Smith (Ohio State University), **Zoe Muzyczka** (University of Cincinnati), **Payal Chakraborty** (Ohio State University), **Elaina Johns-Wolfe** (University of Missouri St. Louis), **Jenny Higgins** (University of Wisconsin-Madison), **Danielle Bessett** (University of Cincinnati), **Alison H. Norris** (Ohio State University)

People who live in abortion-restrictive states or have fewer abortion facility options are more likely to leave their state of residence to obtain abortion care. With *Roe v. Wade* being threatened at the federal level, the number of people needing to leave their home state for care, and associated burdens, will likely increase.

WHAT POLICIES DRIVE PATIENTS TO SEEK OUT-OF-STATE CARE?

There are two types of policies that drive people to seek out of state abortion care - **policies targeting abortion providers** and **policies targeting people seeking an abortion**. Policies that target abortion providers (i.e. facility size requirements) are medically unnecessary and cause clinics to close. Closures create abortion deserts, which lead to individuals being forced to leave the state to access care. Policies that target a pregnant person seeking an abortion (i.e. gestational limits) may force individuals to travel further to a clinic that has the care they need. People may also leave their state of residence to obtain care for geographical reasons, such as residing near another state's abortion facility.



WHICH STATES HAVE THE HIGHEST AND LOWEST NUMBER OF PATIENTS TRAVELING FOR CARE?

WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF TRAVELING FOR ABORTION CARE?

Needing to travel for care results in a number of burdens.



Patients experiencing financial hardship and those in rural areas face a greater burden since traveling out of state can significantly increase costs.



Health insurance coverage may not include out-of-state abortion care.



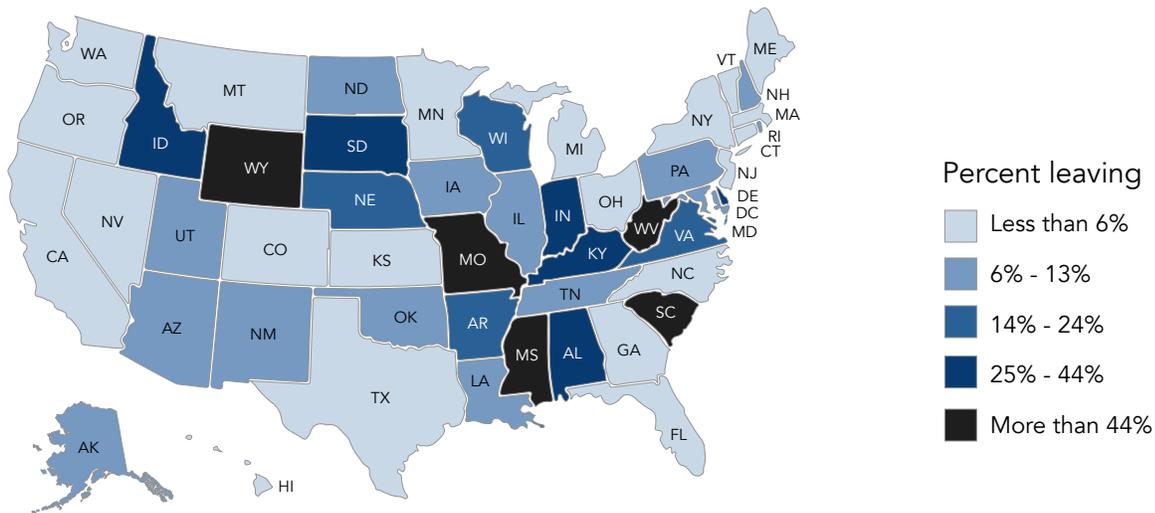
Facilities that receive out-of-state patients must provide care to more people, resulting in increased wait times.

IF ROE V. WADE IS OVERTURNED, HOW WILL THIS IMPACT CROSS-STATE TRAVEL FOR ABORTION CARE?

States with hostile or middle ground abortion policies will likely implement more anti-abortion legislation if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, increasing burdens for those seeking abortion care. Further examination of ways to facilitate access to care, including traveling to non-adjacent states, remains vitally important.

WHAT DOES OUT OF STATE ABORTION TRAVEL LOOK LIKE FOR EVERY STATE?

On average, 8% of patients leave their state of residence for an abortion. However, percent leaving varies widely by state, with states in the Southeast and Midwest having particularly high percentages of people leaving.



WHERE ARE PATIENTS TRAVELING TO AND FROM?

Patients leaving hostile states often travel to another state with similarly hostile policies. This may be related to the geographic clustering of restrictive states in the Midwest and South.

71%

Overall, 71% of patients leaving their state of residence are coming from states with hostile policies

43%

43% of patients leaving their state of residence are going to states that also have hostile policies