

Improving Contraceptive Access

Lessons learned from *The Right Time*, an initiative to promote access to comprehensive family planning services for all Missourians



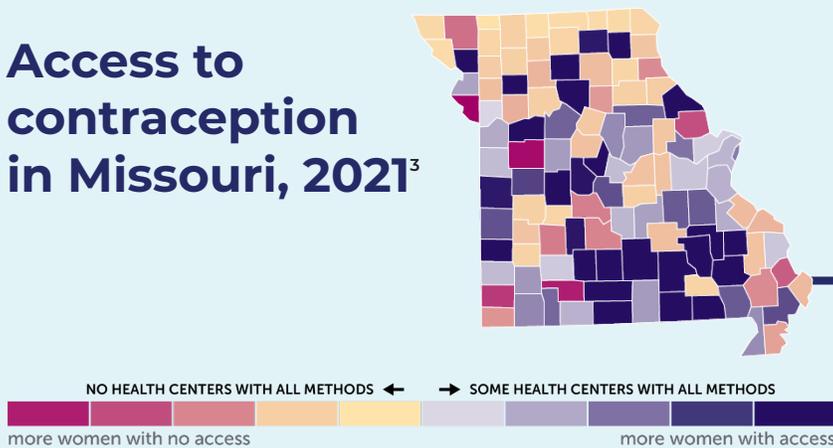
If access to contraception does not improve, the consequences to Missourians' health and the state's economy could be severe.

 Lack of contraceptive access translates to **limited reproductive agency**.

 Lack of reproductive agency leads to **negative health outcomes**, such as maternal depression and child developmental delays.¹

 Increased contraceptive access could save Missouri up to **\$518 million**² dollars each year from averted unplanned pregnancies.

Access to contraception in Missouri, 2021³



375,800 women live in contraceptive deserts, which are counties with no reasonable access to the full range of contraceptive methods.

20% of women who live in contraceptive deserts do not have a contraceptive provider.

Rural areas have the least access to contraception and highest rates of unintended pregnancies.

The consequences



Missouri ranks 42nd out of 50 states in maternal mortality⁴

Pregnant people with mistimed or unplanned pregnancies are more predisposed to maternal deaths and associated risk factors. They are likely to delay prenatal care, experience violence, and have mental health problems. The child has increased risk for mental and physical health problems and is more likely to have learning issues in school.



It costs up to \$518 million²

Unplanned and mistimed pregnancies, which are partially because of limited contraceptive access, costs Missouri an equivalent of 5 percent of the entire state's Medicaid budget. These costs could have been much higher without the limited access to family planning the state does have.

¹ Healthy people 2030. <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/family-planning/reduce-proportion-unintended-pregnancies-fp-01>

² Guttmacher Institute. "State Facts About Unintended Pregnancy: Missouri." 2016. Available at https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/factsheet/mo_8_0.pdf. Accessed July 19, 2022.

³ Power to Decide. "Contraceptive Access in Missouri." Washington, DC: Power to Decide, May 26, 2021. Available at https://powertodecide.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/State%20Factsheet_Missouri.pdf. Accessed August 9, 2022.

⁴ America's Health Rankings. "Annual Report 2021." Minnetonka, MN: America's Health Rankings, December 2021.

What can you do to improve contraceptive access?



Strategies learned at varying levels of interventions from *The Right Time* can help increase contraceptive access in Missouri.



Policy and systems

- **Waiving mileage restrictions** for advanced practice registered nurses allows for greater flexibility of practice and increases contraceptive care in rural Missouri
- Improving **Medicaid** access for pregnant and postpartum people would improve outcomes for 4,500 Missourians and their families
- Waiving restrictions on providers participating in the **Extended Women's Health Services Program** increases the number of reproductive care providers
- Offering **telehealth flexibilities**—such as voice-only services in areas with limited broadband—expands access to virtual contraceptive counseling



Social and community

- Strengthening **cross-sector community collaborations** helps increase opportunities to reach out about contraception
- Integrating **contraceptive outreach into existing programming** such as food distribution events expands reach
- Expanding **broadband internet** in rural areas increases telehealth use, including virtual contraceptive counseling
- Offering **virtual contraceptive outreach events** increases access for people with transportation, child care, or other barriers to in-person engagement



Health care center

- Adapting **workflows** increases efficiency for in-person reproductive health care visits
- Implementing **telehealth services** improves contraceptive care delivery options
- Offering **innovative contraceptive delivery strategies**—such as contraception mailings, drive-through contraceptive clinics, and extended contraceptive supply—improves access and reduces barriers to contraceptive care
- Expanding the **health care workforce** addresses staff turnover and shortages among reproductive care providers



Individual

- Using **secure telehealth platforms** increases confidentiality during remote reproductive health care counseling
- Accessing **virtual visits, curbside or mail-order pharmacies, or curbside lab tests** reduces travel and time barriers to accessing reproductive health care

Source: Mathematica's analysis of relevant factors influencing access to contraception during COVID-19 in Missouri.

The Right Time
Your birth control, your way

<https://therighttime.org/>