

**REWIRE.NEWS STYLE GUIDE  
ACES 2018**

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**abortion care/safe abortion care**

Use “safe abortion care” only when referring to circumstances in which it’s important to note the safety of the procedure. We do not want to imply that the procedure is inherently unsafe.

**abortion “procedure”/ “the procedure”**

Avoid, when possible, calling abortion “the procedure,” unless referring very specifically to a form of abortion. Say “abortion”/ “an abortion” specifically.

**abortion reversal**

Use “so-called” or quotes around the phrase.

**ambulatory surgical center**

Our preference is “surgical” and not “surgery” (as in “ambulatory surgery center”). A targeted regulation of abortion providers (TRAP) law.

**anti-choice, anti-abortion, anti-contraception**

In general, use anti-choice to refer to the movement, a position held by a group or lawmaker, or legislation that attempts to curtail access to abortion care or contraception. Use anti-abortion when referring to something, like a law, that is specifically anti-abortion.

**baby**

Use only when referring to a newborn child, unless a writer uses it in a commentary referring to their personal story or in a quote.

**bathroom discrimination bills**

Use instead of “bathroom bills”

**conception**

Not synonymous with fertilization or implantation.

**court decisions**

6-3 decision, not 6-to-3 decision

Appellate courts “reverse,” “strike down,” “affirm,” or “let stand” decisions.

The U.S. Supreme Court “overrules” or “overturns” decisions.

**crisis pregnancy centers**

When possible, use “fake clinics” to denote their mission (to persuade women out of having abortions)

**“D and E”**

Dilation and evacuation; the most common form of second-trimester abortion

**“D and X” / “Intact D and E”**

Dilation and extraction / intact dilation and evacuation. Banned under *Gonzales v. Carhart*.

**“dismemberment abortion” ban**

Always use scare quotes. Anti-choice language for dilation and evacuation bans.

**“egg-as-person”/“personhood”**

This phrase, as well as “fertilized egg-as-person” and “providing human rights to fertilized eggs,” are phrases used to describe “personhood” bills or efforts. “Personhood” is almost always in quotes. If using the phrase so-called personhood, omit the quotes. **We put personhood in quotation marks or with “so-called” preceding it, because it is a legally muddy concept. Fetal personhood laws, while sometimes used to protect pregnant people who are the victims of violent crimes, could also be used (and have been used) to criminalize pregnant people who self-induce abortion. They could also outlaw abortion and some kinds of birth control.**

**fetal viability**

A medically variable term that can occur somewhere between 24 and 26 weeks of pregnancy

**hospital admitting privileges**

A targeted regulation of abortion providers (TRAP) law that requires a doctor to have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital. Hospitals could possibly not grant this for political or religious reasons.

**late-term abortion**

Do not use; it is not a medical term. Instead, use “later abortion.”

**mother**

Do not use to describe a pregnant woman.

**Muslim ban**

Preferred term for President Trump’s executive order that restricted immigration and refugees from seven Muslim-majority nations and its subsequent iterations.

**“pain-capable abortion”**

There is overwhelming scientific evidence that fetuses cannot feel pain at 20 weeks, which is when a lot of “pain-capable abortion bans” start. Pain-capable should be put in scare quotes when it is used at all.

**parental consent / notification laws**

Not the same thing—be aware of which, if any, are in place in the state in question. (Bypassing them for a minor requires a judicial bypass, in which they typically have to prove to a judge that they’re mature enough to have an abortion.)

**“partial-birth abortion”**

Always use scare quotes.

**pregnant woman/person**

To acknowledge anyone with a uterus can get pregnant, we use gender neutral terms.

**pro-choice**

Always use. Never use “pro-abortion” unless it is in a quote.

**pro-life**

Only use in a quote or when it is part of an organization’s name. In all other cases, use “anti-choice.”

**reproductive health, reproductive rights, and reproductive justice**

These are not interchangeable terms. There’s this cheat sheet (originally from Aimee Thorne-Thomsen of Advocates for Youth):

reproductive health: services, health delivery

reproductive rights: laws

reproductive justice: women of color-led efforts to build power in the face of reproductive oppression

**unintended/unwanted**

Use according to the context. They are not interchangeable.

Additional resources

<https://forwardtogether.org/tools/media-guide-abortion-latinx-community/>

<http://nationalacademies.org/hmd/reports/2018/the-safety-and-quality-of-abortion-care-in-the-united-states.aspx>

<https://rewire.news/article/2015/06/30/make-safe-abortion-safer/>

<https://rewire.news/article/2013/10/17/whats-in-a-week-pregnancy-dating-standards-and-what-they-mean/>

<https://rewire.news/false-witnesses/>

<https://www.guttmacher.org/evidence-you-can-use/late-abortion>

<https://rewire.news/article/2017/03/21/falsehood-becomes-law-abortion-reversal-case-study/>

<https://www.cosmopolitan.com/politics/a12766188/late-term-abortion-20-week-ban/>