

PROVINCIAL LEGAL SNAPSHOT

British Columbia

Abortion law, funding, and access — one-page reference

As of Jul 13, 2026

Research completed Jul 13, 2026

Confidence: high



- Abortion is legal at every stage of pregnancy — Canada has had no criminal abortion law since 1988 — and access in this jurisdiction is broad.

LEGAL LIMIT	None (nationwide)	OFFERED LOCALLY TO	27 weeks (policy)	✓ INSURED SERVICE	Yes	✓ CLINIC ABORTIONS FUNDED	Yes
✓ MIFEGYMISO COVERED FOR ALL	Yes	✓ TELEHEALTH	Available	✓ SAFE-ACCESS ZONES	Law in force	✓ RECIPROCAL BILLING	Covered
✓ TRAVEL ASSISTANCE	Yes	INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTION	Yes	PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	Not required	MINOR CONSENT	Mature minor common law
PENDING CHANGE	See below						

§ Jurisdiction overview

British Columbia provides broad, publicly funded abortion access through hospitals, clinics, and telehealth, with a 27-week-6-day functional surgical limit, a long-standing safe-access-zone law, and universally covered Mifegymiso, though Catholic hospitals decline to provide abortion services.

Access to Abortion Services Act, RSBC 1996, c 1, Preamble · Abortion Services Statutes Amendment Act, 2001, SBC 2001, c 8, s 24.1 and Schedule · Medicare Protection Act, RSBC 1996, c 286

▣ Funding & coverage

Surgical abortion is insured as a medically required service under the Medical Services Plan, and Mifegymiso is universally covered at no cost under PharmaCare Plan Z since January 2018.

Government of British Columbia, 'Ending a pregnancy' (last updated June 30, 2022) · Medicare Protection Act, RSBC 1996, c 286, s 1 (definition of 'benefits') · BC PharmaCare Plan Z (Assurance)

CLINIC VS. HOSPITAL FUNDING

BC funds abortion in both hospitals and free-standing clinics without restriction, complying with the Canada Health Act's requirement that medically necessary services be insured regardless of facility type.

TRAVEL & OUT-OF-PROVINCE CARE

BC's Travel Assistance Program (TAP BC) provides discounted transportation through partner carriers for residents who must travel within the province for specialist medical services not available locally, including abortion, but does not cover accommodation, meals, or direct reimbursement.

● Where services actually are

BC has 28 publicly listed abortion service points — 20 for medication abortion and 18 for procedural abortion — concentrated in the Lower Mainland and southern Vancouver Island, with services also available through telehealth and in several regional hospitals. BC's functional gestational limit for procedural abortion is just under 28 weeks at BC Women's Hospital; earlier limits apply at most other facilities, and patients needing later care are referred to the United States.

Abortion Access Tracker, 'British Columbia' · Abortion Services Statutes Amendment Act, 2001, SBC 2001, c 8, Schedule · BC Women's Hospital, 'Abortion Services'

MINORS

Under the Infants Act, a minor of any age in BC may consent to abortion if the provider assesses they understand the nature, consequences, risks, and benefits, and that the care is in their best interest; no parental consent or notification is required.

SAFE-ACCESS ZONES

BC's Access to Abortion Services Act, Canada's first safe-access-zone law, creates automatic zones around providers' offices (10-20 m) and residences (160 m), and facility zones up to 50 m, upheld as constitutional in R v Spratt, 2008 BCCA 340.

▣ Recent changes

- May 2026 BC government announced expansion of midwives' scope of practice to include Mifegymiso prescribing for medical abortion within the first trimester, along with other reproductive health services.

- **Apr 2026** Health Professions and Occupations Act came into effect, modernizing the regulation of health professionals in BC.
- **Jun 2025** Elizabeth Bagshaw Clinic in Vancouver permanently closed after 35 years of service, citing financial and operational barriers.
- **Apr 2023** BC became the first province to make prescription contraception universally free at no cost, covering more than 60 commonly used birth-control methods including IUDs, hormonal implants, injections, and the morning-after pill through PharmaCare.
- **Jun 2019** Federal repeal of Criminal Code ss 287-288 (former abortion offences) came into force via An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Young Offenders Act and other Acts, SC 2019, c 25, removing the last vestiges of criminal abortion law in Canada.
- **Jan 2018** BC implemented universal, no-cost coverage of Mifegymiso under PharmaCare Plan Z for all MSP-enrolled residents, becoming the sixth Canadian province to provide free access to the abortion pill.
- **Nov 2017** Health Canada removed mandatory prescriber training and enabled direct pharmacy dispensing of Mifegymiso, eliminating the need for patients to take the medication in a doctor's office.

⌘ Pending changes to watch

Midwives' scope expansion — Mifegymiso prescribing
Regulation · Announced May 7, 2026; BCCNM developing standards of practice and working with UBC on additional education; regulation changes pending, no fixed effective date

Once in effect, midwives across BC will be able to prescribe Mifegymiso for medical abortion in the first trimester, significantly expanding access in rural and underserved communities where midwives are often the primary maternity care providers.

Vancouver Coastal Health consolidation of reproductive health services
Policy · Ongoing discussions among Vancouver Coastal Health, Everywoman's Health Centre, and Willow Clinic regarding potential amalgamation into one new modern clinic to streamline services; Elizabeth Bagshaw Clinic cited this uncertainty as a factor in its 2025 closure

A consolidated Vancouver clinic could improve centralized booking, expand range of reproductive and gynecological services, reduce administrative duplication, increase training opportunities, and enhance security.

⌘ Key authorities

Access to Abortion Services Act Access to Abortion Services Act, RSBC 1996, c 1
Canada's first safe-access-zone law, establishing protected areas around abortion facilities, providers' offices, and residences; upheld as constitutional in R v Spratt, 2008 BCCA 340.

Abortion Services Statutes Amendment Act, 2001 Abortion Services Statutes Amendment Act, 2001, SBC 2001, c 8
Mandates 34 named hospitals to provide abortion facilities and services; also created FIPPA s 22.1 protecting abortion-services information from disclosure.

Medicare Protection Act Medicare Protection Act, RSBC 1996, c 286
Establishes MSP, defines 'benefits' to include medically required services, governs out-of-province coverage, and provides the statutory framework for public health insurance in BC.

Infants Act (s 17) Infants Act, RSBC 1996, c 223, s 17
Codifies the mature-minor doctrine in BC: minors of any age may consent to health care including abortion without parental involvement if assessed as capable.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (s 22.1) Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, RSBC 1996, c 165, s 22.1
Creates a unique statutory duty for public bodies to refuse disclosure of information relating to abortion services, protecting provider and patient privacy.

Generated from the structured legal focused deep-research record for BC, Canada (research completed 2026-07-13). This snapshot condenses a much larger sourced dataset — full citations, quoted statutory text, and plain-language explanations are in the full British Columbia survey. This document has not been reviewed by a lawyer and should not be used as legal advice.