



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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CITY COUNCIL INTRODUCES BODILY AUTONOMY ORDINANCE 2.0 IN AN EFFORT TO FURTHER PROTECT THOSE SEEKING REPRODUCTIVE OR GENDER AFFIRMING CARE FROM DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION

This Ordinance will prohibit employers and landlords from discriminating or retaliating against individuals for receiving reproductive healthcare or gender affirming care

CHICAGO — Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, Alderwoman Maria Hadden (49th Ward), Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35th Ward), Alderwoman Rossana Rodriguez Sanchez (33rd Ward), and Alderman Matt Martin (47th Ward) introduced the Bodily Autonomy 2.0 ordinance which seeks to prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who has received reproductive healthcare or gender affirming care in the context of employment as well as in housing. Further, the ordinance seeks to prevent employers from accessing a worker's personal health information on reproductive healthcare or gender affirming care without their affirmative written consent to further protect against discrimination or retaliation.

These protections are critical as the deterioration of the fundamental right to bodily autonomy across the country persists. This ordinance builds off the initial Bodily Autonomy ordinance passed by City Council in September 2021, which prohibits any City department or agency from participating in any investigation or proceeding related to reproductive and gender-affirming care led by another jurisdiction, including anti-abortion states.

Under the new proposed ordinance, the Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR) has jurisdiction over investigating complaints of discrimination or retaliation in the context of housing and shares joint jurisdiction with the Office of Labor Standards at the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) for complaints related to discrimination or retaliation in the workplace.

Since the leaked U.S. Supreme Court decision on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* in May 2022, and its release in June 2022, Mayor Lightfoot has doubled



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down on her commitment to protecting the fundamental right to reproductive healthcare.

“When we learned that protections for safe, legal abortions would be dissolved through *Roe V. Wade*, the City of Chicago jumped into action to defend critically-needed reproductive health care for our communities,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “The introduction of this ordinance solidifies our commitment to the many women and individuals who seek healthcare rights and protections. We will continue to be loud and clear in our belief that abortion and one’s expression of their gender identity is a human right that should be protected and available to everyone in our city.”

In May 2022, Mayor Lightfoot announced the [*Justice for All Pledge*](#), which commits to protecting and creating fair access to reproductive, obstetric and gynecological care, and related resources that enhance and facilitate everyone’s ability to thrive. Mayor Lightfoot backed the pledge with an initial \$500,000 investment to support providers that assist patients seeking abortions through lodging, transportation, and follow-up care. These funds have supported the work of the Chicago Abortion Fund and Planned Parenthood of Illinois in 2022. Through the 2023 City budget, the Chicago Department of Public Health budgeted an additional \$1.5 million to support services for those seeking reproductive healthcare. The protections introduced today in the Bodily Autonomy 2.0 ordinance reinforce that commitment and emphasize that the City will do everything in its power to ensure individuals remain safe and free from discrimination during and after seeking critical medical care in Chicago.

“Reproductive and gender affirming care are vital medical services,” said Chicago Department of Public Health Commissioner Allison Arwady, M.D. “Exploiting this health information to discriminate against someone only increases stigma and can negatively impact people’s ability to access safe, high-quality services. This ordinance is an important step toward strengthening protections for those living and working in our great city.”

“I applaud Mayor Lightfoot, and the City Council for making the issue of bodily autonomy a priority as demonstrated by their rapid response in crafting this important ordinance. Through their efforts, the City will ensure that no one is made a victim for exercising their rights to make decisions regarding their reproductive health care and gender affirming care. The Commission on Human Relations counts it an honor to help in the enforcement of this important legislation and will exercise our full authority to prevent anyone from being subject to discrimination in our city,” said Nancy Andrade, Commissioner for the Chicago Commission on Human Relations.



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“Since the inception of the BACP Office of Labor Standards in 2019, the City has established and enforced a wide range of critical worker protections,” said Kenneth J. Meyer, BACP Commissioner. “The proposed ordinance protects workers’ rights to exercise their choices related to gender-affirming care and bodily autonomy. Through our enforcement authority, workers will be protected from discrimination and retaliation in the workplace.”

“I am proud of the collaborative work and support from Mayor Lightfoot, members of our City Council and the City Departments as we continue to demonstrate our commitment to individuals seeking reproductive and gender affirming care in Chicago. I applaud the additional measures we are taking today to protect individuals as they advocate for their rights,” said Alderman Maria Hadden, 49th Ward.

Though federal protections for abortions were dissolved with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, abortion is still legal in Illinois and available in Chicago. Many states had or passed new laws that banned abortion when *Roe v. Wade* was struck down. Illinois has a law that keeps abortion legal, the Reproductive Health Act, which was signed into law by Governor JB Pritzker in 2019.

To learn more about services and resources available for those seeking reproductive healthcare, visit [Chicago.gov/abortioncare](https://chicago.gov/abortioncare).

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