

Sexual Violence and Reproductive Rights

FACT SHEET

In the United States, almost **3 million** women have experienced **Rape-Related Pregnancies (RRP)** sometime during their life.¹ A 2018 study on RRP and its association with reproductive coercion in the U.S. found that approximately **2.9 million** U.S. women (**2.4%**) experienced RRP in their lifetime.² Of these rape victims:

- **77.3%** reported the perpetrator was a current or former intimate partner
- **26.2%** of intimate partner rape victims reported RRP, compared with **5.2%** who reported rape by an acquaintance and **6.9%** who reported rape by a stranger

A three-year study of RRP in the U.S. found that **5%** of rape victims of reproductive age became pregnant due to rape, with adolescents experiencing the majority of these RRP. Of these victims:³

- **50%** terminated the pregnancy
- **11.8%** miscarried
- **32.2%** kept the child
- **5.9%** placed the child for adoption

Exposure to intimate partner violence, absence of partner due to estrangement or death, lack of financial and emotional support from partner, lack of pregnancy symptoms, and psychological denial of pregnancy are all reported reasons for having an abortion past 12 weeks.⁴

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and RRP⁵

- Around **4-8%** percent of pregnant women overall are abused by their partners, with women experiencing unwanted or mistimed pregnancies at a greater risk of being victims of violence
- IPV is associated with a **higher risk** of unintended pregnancy, repeat abortions, and STIs
- Women who are exposed to IPV are **more likely** than other pregnant women to have a second-trimester abortion

Reproductive coercion is behavior intended to maintain power and control over someone's reproductive health. It can include sexually coercive behaviors,⁶ interference with contraception, pregnancy pressure, and pregnancy coercion.⁷

A study by the CDC found that of the women who were raped by an intimate partner:⁸

- **30%** experienced a form of reproductive coercion by the same partner
- **20%** reported that their partner had tried to get them pregnant when they did not want to be pregnant or stopped them from using birth control
- **23%** reported their partner refused to use a condom

Abortion Access in Maryland

Maryland is **1 of 16** states to have enacted state laws protecting the right to receive an abortion. Maryland does not place restrictions on the right to an abortion up until the point of "viability," or at any point during pregnancy if necessary to protect the life or health of the pregnant person.⁹

¹ CDC. (2020, June 1). *Understanding Pregnancy Resulting from Rape in the United States*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

² Basile, K. C., Smith, S. G., Liu, Y., Kresnow, M., Fasula, A. M., Gilbert, L., & Chen, J. (2018). Rape-related pregnancy and association with reproductive coercion in the U.S. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 55(6), 770-776. DOI: 10.1016/j.amepre.2018.07.028

³ Holmes, M. M., Resnick, H. S., Kilpatrick, D. G., Best, C. L. (1996). Rape-related pregnancy: Estimates and descriptive characteristics from a national sample. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 175(2), 320-325. DOI: 10.1016/S0002-9378(96)70141-2

⁴ Planned Parenthood. (2015). *Abortion After the First Trimester in the United States*. Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

⁵ Planned Parenthood. (2012). *Intimate Partner Violence and Reproductive Coercion Fact Sheet*. Katharine Dexter McCormick Library and the Education Division of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

⁶ Reproductive abuse and coercion. (2019, July 17). WomensLaw.org. <https://www.womenslaw.org/about-abuse/forms-abuse/reproductive-abuse-and-coercion>

⁷ Basile, K. C., Smith, S. G., Liu, Y., Kresnow, M., Fasula, A. M., Gilbert, L., & Chen, J. (2018). Rape-related pregnancy and association with reproductive coercion in the U.S. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 55(6), 770-776. DOI: 10.1016/j.amepre.2018.07.028

⁸ CDC. (2020, June 1). *Understanding Pregnancy Resulting from Rape in the United States*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

⁹ MD Code, Health – General §20-209.

As of July 1, 2022, abortion access in Maryland was expanded to include:

- Medicaid or health insurance coverage of abortion care services¹⁰
- Ensures no cost-sharing, co-pays, or deductibles for abortion care services⁸
- Expanded criteria for who may perform abortions, to include any “qualified provider” and not just “licensed physicians”¹¹
- Funding to train qualified providers to provide abortion care services¹²

On January 19, 2023, Governor Moore announced the release of funding for a training program for abortion providers in Maryland.¹³

Resources for Maryland Survivors Seeking to Terminate a Pregnancy

- Find A Provider: <https://prochoice.org/patients/find-a-provider>
- Planned Parenthood of Maryland: <https://plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-maryland>
- Whole Woman’s Health of Baltimore: www.wholewomanshealth.com/abortion-clinics/baltimore-md
- Women’s Health Center of Maryland: <https://www.womenshealthmd.org>
- Abortion Funds by State: <https://abortionfunds.org/need-abortion/#funds-list>
- Baltimore Abortion Fund: <https://baltimoreabortionfund.org>
 - Abortion Funding: **(443) 853-8445** | www.baltimoreabortionfund.org/abortion_funding
 - General Inquiries: **(443) 247-5600** | info@baltimoreabortionfund.org
- DC Abortion Fund: **(202) 240-8997** | <https://dcabortionfund.org>

¹⁰ *Id.* at §15-103, Maryland Code, Insurance §15-857

¹¹ MD Code, Health- General. at §20-103

¹² *Id.* at §13-4401 *et. seq.*

¹³ Domen, J. (2023, January 20). *Md. Gov. Moore releases millions in held funding: issues executive orders*. WTOP News. <https://wtop.com/maryland/2023/01/md-gov-moore-releases-millions-in-held-funding-issues-executive-orders/>