

# West Virginia

*GENBIOPRO, INC. v. Sorsaia*, No. 3:23-cv-00058 (S. Dist. of West Virginia Jan. 25, 2023)  
lawsuit filed by plaintiffs under 42 U.S.C. s. 1983 challenging W. Virginia's ban on mifepristone.  
(filed 1/25/23)

## **§ 16-20-1. Unborn Child Protection from Dismemberment Abortion Act.**

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**(a) Definitions.** — For purposes of this section:

(1) “Abortion” means the same as that term is defined in section two, article two-f, chapter sixteen of this code.

(2) “Attempt to perform an abortion” means the same as that term is defined in section two, article two-m, chapter sixteen of this code.

(3) “Dismemberment abortion” means, with the purpose of causing the death of an unborn child, purposely to dismember a living unborn child and extract him or her one piece at a time from the uterus through use of clamps, grasping forceps, tongs, scissors or similar instruments that, through the convergence of two rigid levers, slice, crush or grasp a portion of the unborn child's body to cut or rip it off. The term “dismemberment abortion” includes an abortion in which a dismemberment abortion is performed to cause the death of an unborn child but suction is subsequently used to extract fetal parts after the death of the unborn child. The term “dismemberment abortion” does not include an abortion which uses suction to dismember the body of the unborn child by sucking fetal parts into a collection container, an abortion following fetal demise which uses a suction curette, suction curettage or forceps to dismember the body of a dead unborn child, or when forceps are used following an induced fetal demise by other means.

(4) “Medical emergency” means the same as that term is defined in section two, article two-m, chapter sixteen of this code.

(5) “Physician” means the same as that term is defined in section two, article two-m, chapter sixteen of this code.

(6) “Reasonable medical judgement” means the same as that term is defined in section two, article two-M, chapter sixteen of this code.

(7) “Woman” means a female human being whether or not she has reached the age of majority.

**(b) Prohibition.** — No person may perform, or attempt to perform, a dismemberment abortion as defined in this section, unless in reasonable medical judgment the woman has a condition that, on the basis of reasonable medical judgment, so complicates her medical condition as to necessitate the abortion of her pregnancy to avert her death or to avert serious risk of substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function, not including psychological or emotional conditions. No condition may be deemed a medical emergency if based on a claim or diagnosis that the woman will engage in conduct which she intends to result in her death or in substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function.

**(c) Enforcement.** —

(1) Any physician or other licensed medical practitioner who intentionally or recklessly performs or induces an abortion in violation of this article is considered to have acted outside the scope of practice permitted by law or otherwise in breach of the standard of care owed to patients, and is subject to discipline from the applicable licensure board for that conduct, including, but not limited to, loss of professional license to practice.

(2) Any person, not subject to subdivision (1) of this subsection, who intentionally or recklessly performs or induces an abortion in violation of this article is considered to have engaged in the unauthorized practice of medicine in violation of section thirteen, article three, chapter thirty of this code, and, upon conviction, subject to the penalties contained in that section.

(3) In addition to the penalties set forth in subdivisions (1) and (2) of this section, a patient may seek any remedy otherwise available to such patient by applicable law.

(4) No penalty may be assessed against any patient upon whom an abortion is performed or induced or attempted to be performed or induced.

**(d) Miscellaneous Provisions.** —

- (1) This section does not prevent an abortion by any other method for any reason including rape and incest.
- (2) Nothing in this section may be construed as creating or recognizing a right to abortion, nor a right to a particular method of abortion.
- (e) Effective from the reenactment of this section during the third extraordinary session of the Legislature, 2022, this article is of no force or effect unless any provision of §16-2R-1 et seq. of this code is judicially determined to be unconstitutional.

[W. Va. Code § 16-2O-1](#)

## **§ 16-2P-1. Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.**

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**(a) Definitions.** — For purposes of this section:

- (1) “Abortion” has the same meaning as that set forth in §16-2F-2 of this code.
- (2) “Attempt to perform an abortion” has the same meaning as that set forth in §16-2M-2 of this code.
- (3) “Born alive” means the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of the fetus, at any stage of development, who after such expulsion or extraction breathes or has a beating heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles, regardless of whether the umbilical cord has been cut, and regardless of whether the expulsion or extraction occurs as a result of natural or induced labor, cesarean section, or induced abortion.
- (4) “Fetus” has the same meaning as that set forth in §16-2M-2 of this code.
- (5) “Licensed Medical Professional” means a person licensed under Chapter 30 of this code practicing within his or her scope of practice.
- (6) “Physician” has the same meaning as set forth in §16-2M-2 of this code.
- (7) “Reasonable medical judgment” has the same meaning as set forth in §16-2M-2 of this code.

**(b) Prohibition.** —

(1) If a physician performs or attempts to perform an abortion that results in a child being born alive the physician shall:

(A) Exercise the same degree of reasonable medical judgment to preserve the life and health of the child as a physician would render to any other child born alive at the same gestational age; and

(B) Ensure that the child born alive is immediately transported and admitted to a hospital.

(2) A person who has knowledge of a failure to comply with the requirements of this subsection shall report the failure to the applicable licensing board.

**(c) Enforcement.** —

(1) Any physician or other licensed medical professional who knowingly and willingly violates subsection (b) of this section is considered to have breached the standard of care owed to patients, and is subject to discipline from the applicable licensure board for that conduct, including, but not limited to, loss of professional license to practice.

(2) Any person, not subject to subdivision (1) of this subsection, who knowingly and willfully violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of the unauthorized practice of medicine in violation of §30-3-13 of this code, and, upon conviction thereof, is subject to the penalties contained in that section.

(3) In addition to the penalties set forth in this section, a patient may seek any remedy otherwise available to the patient by applicable law.

(4) No penalty may be assessed against any patient upon whom an abortion is performed or attempted to be performed.

(d) Effective from the reenactment of this section during the third extraordinary session of the Legislature, 2022, this article is of no force or effect unless any provision of §16-2R-1 et seq. of this code is judicially determined to be unconstitutional.

[W. Va. Code § 16-2P-1](#)

## **§ 16-2Q-1. Abortion may not be performed because of a disability, except in a**

## **medical emergency.**

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**(a)** As used in this article:

“Abortion” means the same as that term is defined in §16-2F-2 of this code.

“Attempt to perform or induce an abortion” means the same as that term is defined in §16-2M-2 of this code.

“Because of a disability” means on account of the presence or presumed presence of a disability or diagnosis in a fetus including, but not limited to, chromosomal disorders or morphological malformations occurring as the result of atypical gene expressions.

“Commissioner” means the Commissioner of the Bureau for Public Health.

“Licensed medical professional” means a person licensed under Chapter 30 of this code practicing within his or her scope of practice.

“Medical emergency” means the same as that term is defined in §16-2I-1 of this code.

“Nonmedically viable fetus” means the same as that term is defined in §16-2M-2 of this code.

“Reasonable medical judgment” means the same as that term is defined in §16-2M-2 of this code.

**(b)** Except in a medical emergency or a nonmedically viable fetus, a licensed medical professional may not perform or attempt to perform or induce an abortion, unless the patient acknowledges that the abortion is not being sought because of a disability. The licensed medical professional shall document these facts in the patient’s chart and report such with the commissioner.

**(c)** Except in a medical emergency or a nonmedically viable fetus, a licensed medical professional may not intentionally perform or attempt to perform or induce an abortion of a fetus, if the abortion is being sought because of a disability.

**(d)**

**(1)** If a licensed medical professional performs or induces an abortion on a fetus, the licensed medical professional shall, within 15 days of the procedure, cause to be filed with the commissioner, on a form supplied by the commissioner, a report containing the following information:

**(A)** Date the abortion was performed;

**(B)** Specific method of abortion used;

**(C)** A statement from the patient confirming that the reason for the abortion was not because of a disability;

**(D)** Probable health consequences of the abortion to the patient;

**(E)** Whether a medical emergency existed; and

**(F)** Whether the fetus was a nonmedically viable fetus.

**(2)** The licensed medical professional shall sign the form as his or her attestation under oath that the information stated is true and correct to the best of his or her knowledge.

**(3)** Reports required and submitted under this section may not contain the name of the patient upon whom the abortion was performed or any other information or identifiers that would make it possible to identify, in any manner or under any circumstances, a woman who obtained or sought to obtain an abortion.

**(g)** A licensed medical professional that administers, or causes to be administered, a test for a disability or diagnosis to a fetus shall provide the patient with educational information made available by the bureau as provided in this section, within a reasonable time, if the test result confirms the presence of a disability.

**(h)** The Bureau for Public Health shall make the following available through the bureau’s publicly accessible internet website:

**(1)** Up-to-date, evidence-based information about any in-utero disability or diagnosis that has been peer reviewed by medical experts and any national disability rights organizations. The information provided shall include the following:

**(A)** Physical, developmental, educational, and psychosocial outcomes;

**(B)** Life expectancy;

**(C)** Clinical course;

**(D)** Intellectual and functional development;

**(E)** Treatment options; and

**(F)** Any other information the bureau deems necessary;

**(2)** Contact information regarding first call programs and support services, including the following:

**(A)** Information hotlines specific to any in-utero fetal disabilities or conditions;

**(B)** Relevant resource centers or clearinghouses;

**(C)** Information about adoption specific to disabilities;

**(D)** National and local disability rights organizations; and

(E) Education and support programs.

(i) The information provided in accordance with this section shall conform to the applicable standard or standards provided in the Enhanced National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care as adopted by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and published in the Federal Register on September 24, 2013.

(j) A licensed medical professional who intentionally or recklessly performs or induces an abortion in violation of this section is considered to have acted outside the scope of practice permitted by law or otherwise in breach of the standard of care owed to a patient, and is subject to discipline from the applicable licensure board for that conduct, including, but not limited to, loss of professional license to practice.

(k) A person, not subject to subsection (f) of this section, who intentionally or recklessly performs or induces an abortion in violation of this article is considered to have engaged in the unauthorized practice of medicine in violation of §30-3-13 of this code, and upon conviction, subject to the penalties contained in that section.

(l) A penalty may not be assessed against any patient upon whom an abortion is performed or induced or attempted to be performed or induced.

(m) Effective from the reenactment of this section during the third extraordinary session of the Legislature, 2022, this article is of no force or effect unless any provision of §16-2R-1 et seq. of this code is judicially determined to be unconstitutional.

[W. Va. Code § 16-2Q-1](#)

### **W. Va. Code § 16-2R-3. Prohibition to perform an abortion.**

(a) An abortion may not be performed or induced or be attempted to be performed or induced unless in the reasonable medical judgment of a licensed medical professional:

- (1) The embryo or fetus is nonviable;
- (2) The pregnancy is ectopic; or
- (3) A medical emergency exists.

(b) The prohibition set forth in subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to an adult within the first 8 weeks of pregnancy if the pregnancy is the result of sexual assault, as defined in [§61-8B-1](#) et seq. of this code, or incest, as defined in [§61-8-12](#) of this code, and at least 48 hours prior to the abortion the patient has reported the sexual assault or incest to a law enforcement agency having jurisdiction to investigate the complaint and provided the report to the licensed medical professional performing the abortion.

(c) The prohibition set forth in subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to a minor or an incompetent or incapacitated adult within the first 14 weeks of pregnancy if the pregnancy is the result of sexual assault, as defined in [§61-8B-1](#) et seq. of this code, or incest, as defined in [§61-8-12](#) of this code, and at least 48 hours prior to the abortion the patient has:

- (1) A report of the sexual assault or incest has been made to law enforcement having jurisdiction to investigate the complaint; or
- (2) The patient has obtained medical treatment for the sexual assault or incest or any injury related to the sexual assault or incest from a licensed medical professional or in a hospital, as defined in [§16-5B-1](#) of this code, which is licensed by the Office of Health Facility Licensure and Certification of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources: Provided, That the licensed medical professional or hospital, as defined in [§16-5B-1](#) of this code, which is licensed by the Office of Health Facility Licensure and Certification of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, and which performed or provided such medical treatment may not perform or provide the abortion

arising from such sexual assault or incest.

(d) In all cases where a report of sexual assault or incest against a minor is made pursuant this subsection (c), the agency or person to whom the report is made shall report the sexual assault or incest to the Child Abuse and Neglect Investigations Unit of the West Virginia State Police within 48 hours.

(e) An abortion performed pursuant to this section may not use the partial birth abortion procedure.

(f) A surgical abortion performed or induced or attempted to be performed or induced pursuant to this section shall be in a hospital, as defined in [§16-5B-1](#) of this code, which is licensed by the Office of Health Facility Licensure and Certification of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources.

(g) An abortion performed or induced or attempted to be performed or induced shall be performed by a licensed medical professional who has West Virginia hospital privileges.

#### **§ 16-2R-4. Not considered an abortion.**

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(a) Abortion does not include:

(1) A miscarriage;

(2) An intrauterine fetal demise or stillbirth;

(3) The use of existing established cell lines derived from aborted human embryos or fetuses;

(4) Medical treatment provided to a patient by a licensed medical professional that results in the accidental or unintentional injury or death of an embryo or a fetus;

(5) In vitro fertilization;

(6) Human fetal tissue research, when performed in accordance with Sections 498A and 498B of the PHS Act (42 U.S.C. 289g-1 and 289g-2) and 45 C.F.R. 46.204 and 46.206; or

(7) The prescription, sale, transfer, or use of contraceptive devices, instruments, medicines, or drugs.

(b) This article does not prevent the prescription, sale, or transfer of intrauterine contraceptive devices, other contraceptive devices, or other generally medically accepted contraceptive devices, instruments, medicines, or drugs for a patient who is not known to be pregnant and for whom the contraceptive devices, instruments, medicines, or drugs are prescribed, sold, or transferred solely for contraceptive purposes and not for the purpose of inducing or causing the termination of a known pregnancy.

[W. Va. Code § 16-2R-4](#)

#### **§16-2R-5. Requirements when an abortion is performed on an unemancipated minor.**

(a) If an abortion is performed on an unemancipated minor under the circumstances set forth in §16-2R-3(a) of this code, the licensed medical professional or his or her agent shall provide notice to the parent, guardian, or custodian of the unemancipated minor within 48 hours after the abortion is performed:

(1) Directly, in person, or by telephone to the parent, guardian, or custodian of the unemancipated minor; or

(2) By certified mail addressed to the parent, guardian, or custodian of the unemancipated minor at their usual place of residence, return receipt requested. The delivery shall be sent restricted delivery assuring that the letter is delivered only to the addressee. Time of delivery shall be deemed occur at 12:00 p.m. on the next day on which regular mail delivery takes place.

(b) If an abortion is performed on an unemancipated minor under the circumstances set forth in §16-2R-3(c) of this code, the licensed medical professional may not perform an abortion until notice of the pending abortion as required by this section is complete.

(1) A licensed medical professional or his or her agent may personally give notice directly, in person, or by telephone to the parent, guardian, or custodian of the unemancipated minor. Upon delivery of the notice, 48 hours shall pass until the abortion may be performed.

(2) A licensed medical professional or his or her agent may provide notice by certified mail addressed to the parent, guardian, or custodian of the unemancipated minor at their usual place of residence, return receipt requested. The delivery shall be sent restricted delivery assuring that the letter is delivered only to the addressee. Time of delivery shall be deemed to occur at 12:00 p.m. on the next day on which regular mail delivery takes place. Forty-eight hours shall pass from the date and time of presumed delivery until the abortion may be performed.

(3) Notice may be waived if the person entitled to notice certifies in writing that he or she has been notified. Notice is waived if the certified mail is refused.

(4) An unemancipated minor who objects to the notice being given to a parent, guardian, or custodian may petition for a waiver of the notice to the circuit court of the county in which the unemancipated minor resides. The petition shall be filed under seal.

(5) The petition is not required to be in any specific form and shall be sufficient if it fairly sets forth the facts and circumstances of the matter, but at a minimum shall contain the following information:

(A) The age and educational level of the unemancipated minor;

(B) The county in which the unemancipated minor resides; and

(C) A brief statement of the unemancipated minor's reason or reasons for the desired waiver of notification of the parent, guardian, or custodian of such unemancipated minor.

(6) A petition may not be dismissed nor may any hearing thereon be refused because of any actual or perceived defect in the form of the petition.

(7) The Supreme Court of Appeals is requested to prepare suggested form petitions and accompanying instructions and shall make the same available to the clerks of the circuit courts. The clerks shall make the form petitions and instructions available in the clerk's office.

(8) The proceedings held pursuant to this subsection shall be confidential and the court shall conduct the proceedings in camera. The court shall inform the unemancipated minor of her right to be represented by counsel. If the unemancipated minor desires the services of an attorney, an

attorney shall be appointed to represent her, if the unemancipated minor advises the court under oath or affidavit that she is financially unable to retain counsel.

(9) The court shall conduct a hearing upon the petition forthwith, but may not exceed the next succeeding judicial day. The court shall render its decision immediately and enter its written order not later than 24 hours. All testimony, documents, evidence, petition, orders entered thereon and all records relating to the matter shall be sealed by the clerk and shall not be opened to any person except upon order of the court upon a showing of good cause.

(10) Notice as required by this subsection (b) shall be ordered waived by the court if the court finds either:

(A) That the unemancipated minor is sufficiently mature and informed to make the decision to proceed with the abortion independently and without the notification or involvement of her parent, guardian, or custodian; or

(B) That notification to the person or persons to whom notification would otherwise be required would not be in the best interest of the unemancipated minor.

(11) A confidential appeal to the Supreme Court of Appeals shall be available to any unemancipated minor to whom a court denies a petition under this subsection. An order authorizing an abortion without notification is not appealable.

(12) Filing fees are not required in any proceeding under this subsection.

### **§33-42-3. Definitions.**

#### **For purposes of this article:**

(1) "Advanced nurse practitioner" means a certified nurse-midwife, or an advanced nurse practitioner certified to practice in family practice, women's health (ob/gyn), or primary care adult, geriatric or pediatric practice, practicing within the lawful scope of that provider's practice.

(2) "Health benefits policy" means any individual or group plan, policy or contract for health care services issued, delivered, issued for delivery or renewed in this state by a health care corporation, health maintenance organization, accident and sickness insurer, fraternal benefit society, nonprofit hospital service corporation, nonprofit medical service corporation or similar entity, when the policy or plan covers hospital, medical or surgical expenses.

(3) "Partial-birth abortion" means an abortion in which the person performing the abortion partially vaginally delivers a living fetus before killing the fetus and completing the delivery.

(4) "Physician performing a partial-birth abortion" means a doctor of medicine or osteopathy legally authorized to practice medicine and surgery in West Virginia, or any other individual who is legally authorized by the state to perform abortions: Provided, That any individual who is not a

physician or not otherwise legally authorized by the state to perform abortions, but who nevertheless directly performs a partial-birth abortion, is subject to the provisions of this article.

(5) "Vaginally delivers a living fetus before killing the fetus" means deliberately and intentionally delivering into the vagina a living fetus, or a substantial portion thereof, for the purpose of performing a procedure that the physician or person delivering the living fetus knows will kill the fetus, and kills the fetus.

(6) "Women's health care provider" means an obstetrician/ gynecologist, advanced nurse practitioner certified to practice in women's health (ob/gyn), certified nurse-midwife or physician assistant-midwife practicing within the lawful scope of that provider's practice.

### **§33-42-8. Partial-birth abortions prohibited; criminal penalties; exceptions; hearings by state Board of Medicine.**

(a) Any person who knowingly performs a partial-birth abortion and thereby kills a human fetus is guilty of a felony and, shall be fined not less than \$10,000, nor more than \$50,000, or imprisoned not more than two years, or both fined and imprisoned. This section does not apply to a partial-birth abortion that is necessary to save the life of a mother when her life is endangered by a physical disorder, illness or injury.

(b) A physician charged pursuant to this section may seek a hearing before the West Virginia Board of Medicine on the issue of whether the physician's act was necessary to save the life of a mother pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section. The findings of the Board of Medicine are admissible on this issue at the trial of the physician. Upon a motion by the defendant, the court shall delay the beginning of trial for not more than thirty days to permit the Board of Medicine hearing to take place.

(c) No woman may be prosecuted under the provisions of this section for having a partial-birth abortion, nor may she be prosecuted for conspiring to violate the provisions of this section.

(d) Effective from the reenactment of this section during the third extraordinary session of the Legislature, 2022, this article is of no force or effect unless any provision of §16-2R-1 *et seq.* of this code is judicially determined to be unconstitutional.

### **§ 61-2-8. Abortion; penalty.**

(a) Any person other than a licensed medical professional, as defined in [§16-2R-2](#) of this code, who knowingly and willfully performs, induces, or attempts to perform or induce an abortion, as defined in [§16-2R-2](#) of this code, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned in a state correctional facility for a determinate sentence of not less than three nor more than 10 years.

(b) A person who was formerly a licensed medical professional, as defined in [§16-2R-2](#) of this code and whose license has been revoked pursuant to the provisions of [§16-2R-7](#) of this code, and who knowingly and willfully performs, induces, or attempts to perform or induce a subsequent abortion, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned in a



state correctional facility for a determinate sentence of not less than three nor more than 10 years.

**(c)** This section shall not be construed to subject any pregnant female upon whom an abortion is performed or induced or attempted to be performed or induced to a criminal penalty for any violation of this section as a principal, accessory, accomplice, conspirator, or aider and abettor.

**(d)** The amendments to this section enacted during the third extraordinary session of the Legislature, 2022, shall be effective 90 days from passage.