

Timeline of legal status of abortions in Texas during COVID-19 pandemic March – April 2020

March 22: Governor Abbott issued an emergency order to halt non-essential medical procedures, to conserve personal protective equipment (PPE) for dealing with COVID-19. Attorney General Ken Paxton made it clear that the ban included abortions. The order extends through April 21.

March 30: Judge Yeakel of the federal district court ordered a temporary restraining order (TRO) blocking the enforcement of the order for abortion providers.

March 30: 5th Circuit Court of Appeals immediately stayed the TRO, thereby temporarily reinstating the ban.

April 7: 5th Circuit Court issues a Writ of Mandamus to vacate the TRO (more permanently reinstating the ban).

April 9: Judge Yeakel gave a second TRO against enforcing a ban on pill abortions and for women who would be past the legal limit by April 22, when the order was due to expire.

April 10: 5th Circuit Court of Appeals issues an administrative stay against the new restraining order in part, but still allows abortions for women who would be past the legal limit by April 22. They asked for further arguments from each side by April 13.

April 13: 5th Circuit Court denies the emergency motion to vacate the April 9 TRO. **Pill abortions are now allowed in Texas.**

April 17: Governor Abbott issued a new executive order allowing more medical procedures to take place, but the new allowances do not include abortions. This order extends to May 8.

April 20: 5th Circuit Court now considers the petition for a Writ of Mandamus against the April 9 TRO - The court orders most of the TRO to be vacated, including the part about pill abortions. Abortions for women who would be past the legal limit by April 22 are allowed. **Pill abortions are now illegal again.**

April 24: Statement by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton clarifies that abortions can be included in the exceptions listed in the new emergency order. That is, **abortions can now be done in Texas**, as long as the providers do not ask the state for any additional personal protective equipment (PPE).