



Beneath the Surface: Exposing the Abortion Pill Drug Cartel

A REPORT FROM AMERICAN LIFE LEAGUE

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Introduction

Since the fall of *Roe v. Wade*, abortions done by the abortion pill regimen—a two-pill regimen involving mifepristone and misoprostol (Appendix I)—or "medication abortion," have become the most prevalent method of abortion in this country. In 2024, the Guttmacher Institute reported that <u>63%</u> of all US abortions were done by pills alone in 2023. Planned Parenthood's CEO also shared that nearly <u>70%</u> of its abortion patients choose the abortion pill.

The question then is, with the complex and ever-changing landscape of abortion access in our nation, how are people accessing these pills at such an astonishing rate?

ALL research uncovered an ongoing pill network that is funneling these drugs in from foreign countries to states with so-called "abortion bans." To the casual observer, this pill network is modeled after the drug cartel, creating an abortion pill crisis similar to our nation's narcotics crisis.

This report seeks to expose the abortion pill drug cartel and prove there is no such thing as an abortion-free state in the US (Appendix IV). It also seeks to detail other more conventional methods of obtaining these pills. Finally, the report will shed light on the lack of action for this crisis, leaving us to ask: Why are state and local governments turning a blind eye to baby killing?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

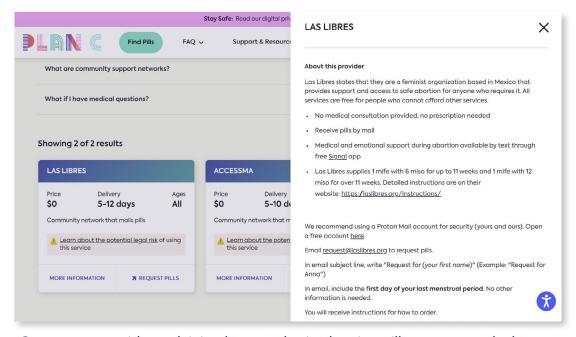
- The abortion pill regimen of mifepristone and misoprostol can be accessed in all 50 states and US territories due to the FDA's 2023 removal of in-person regulations to obtain abortion pills.
- Networks of abortion providers and volunteers are working as drug dealers via the Internet and US postal system and are illegally sending these pills to customers.
- Abortion regulations have not and will not work to stop abortion pills from being sold.
- The United States Postal Service, the FDA, and other US government agencies have neglected to investigate these individual networks of volunteers that provide abortion pills illegally and consistently through the mailing system.

The Abortion Pill Drug Cartel

THE TRAFFICKERS: 'COMMUNITY PARTNER NETWORKS'

ALL discovered that abortion pills are being trafficked through a network of volunteers who ship abortion pills in the mail discreetly and at no charge. These so-called "community networks" currently ship abortion pills to 28 states and five US territories free of charge (with a suggested donation to the specific group mailing the pills). These networks of volunteers intentionally and illegally ship abortion pills to all the states and territories that have the most restrictions on abortion. Even after receiving minimal details about the individual requesting the pills, volunteers will still send abortion pills to the requester if he/she opens a Proton email account and emails the volunteer with the request.

One of the most popular community networks is Las Libres. Based in Mexico, Las Libres uses the <u>following instructions</u> to tell the requester how to obtain the abortion pill regimen: "We recommend using a Proton Mail account for security (yours and ours). Open a free account here. Email [volunteer partner's name] to request pills. In email subject line, write 'Request for (your first name)' (Example: 'Request for Anna'). In email, include the first day of your last menstrual period. **No other information is needed.** You will receive instructions for how to order." (emphasis added)



Plan C, a resource guide explaining how to obtain abortion pills, recommends that women look to a community network, Las Libres, for abortion pills to be shipped from Mexico. https://www.plancpills.org/abortion-pill/alabama#community Accessed: May 28, 2024

Each of these methods provides drugs to kill preborn children and creates potential health risks to their mothers. However, in addition to killing preborn babies, the illegal distribution of abortion pills to anyone of any age from online vendors and community networks is dangerous for other reasons. For example, a 2023 article from *The New York Times* notes that many of these volunteers send the abortion pills from other countries, such as India and Mexico. The article states that the ease in shipping abortion pills from overseas has raised concerns from experts, who say that the pills can be less "effective" due to heat and other damage.

Another concern is that the pills may be laced with other drugs and chemicals and may not be the pills the customer ordered. There is no way to verify this when abortion pills are being sent through a third-party distributor, from all over the world, and with little to no supervision.

This method allows traffickers and abusers to perpetuate their abuse, as they can, without the woman's consent and knowledge and with few questions asked by the distributor, easily obtain these pills and give them to their victim to kill her baby, thus erasing her pregnancy.

TEACHING WOMEN TO HIDE A 'MEDICATION' ABORTION

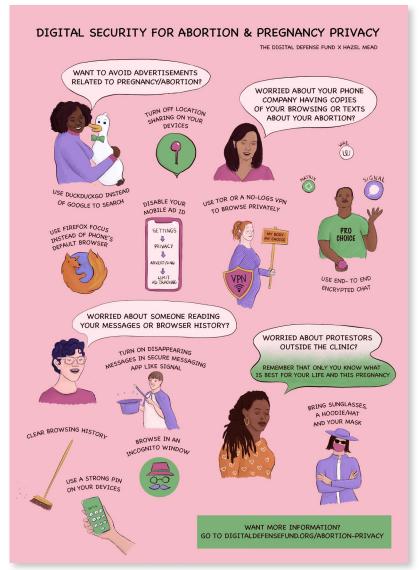
Each of the community partners has similar instructions about using a Proton email address and not asking for any personal information except for a name, an address, and the first day of the woman's last menstrual cycle.

Las Libres even refers women to an organization that shows people how to hide their online abortion pill requests by using <u>private search</u> <u>engines and apps</u> (Appendix II).

Las Libres' "Frequently Asked Questions" page encourages women to lie to their doctors and hide their abortion if they are experiencing excessive bleeding and need medical attention. It states:

What if I go to the emergency room or see a medical provider?

Tell all intake and medical staff that you think you're having a miscarriage. Do not reveal that you took abortion medications—there is absolutely no way for them to know. The pills will not show up in blood tests or scans. ER staff can provide the appropriate postmiscarriage medical care without knowing that you took pills. This also applies to interactions or consultation with your doctor or gynecologist: there is no need to tell them that your miscarriage was self-induced. To be on the safe side, you should erase messages and emails about your abortion from your phone. (emphasis added)



Digital Defense Fund shows women how to "hide" their Internet searches for abortion pills, including using DuckDuckGo instead of Google.

https://digitaldefensefund.org/ddf-guides/abortion-privacy Accessed: June 6, 2024 Another discovery is that Plan C, a project of the National Women's Health Network that serves as an online abortion pill "<u>resource guide</u>," tells minors how to obtain abortion pills if they live in a state that requires parental consent before getting an abortion. On its "<u>Frequently Asked Questions</u>" page, Plan C says the following:

If you do not feel able to involve your parent(s) in your decision, there are two options you can use:

If you are less than 13 weeks pregnant (counting from the first day of your last period), you can get abortion pills mailed to you from Aid Access. They serve minors in all states and territories. They are able to serve minors without parental consent or notification because they operate from states with special laws that do not require them to do this.

You can get a judicial bypass (permission from a judge). The process to get a judicial bypass is free, but can be complicated and requires going through a court process that may take between 1–3 weeks. This usually involves going to a court to fill out forms before setting up a meeting to talk to the judge. The Judicial Bypass Wiki can help you learn how to get a judicial bypass. Organizations like If/When/How, the ACLU, and Jane's Due Process, and other local organizations can also help you.

These abortion pill volunteers serve as drug dealers, in collaboration with more "established" abortion providers, as they deceive women into lying about their use of abortion pills.

ABORTION PILLS USED ON WOMEN WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT

As mentioned above, the online vendors and community volunteers are aiding and abetting the abuse of women with their illegal and secretive drug dealing of abortion pills online. This is in addition to all the preborn children they are murdering with these pills. Just as the buyer doesn't know where the pills come from when sourced through online vendors and volunteers, the providers do not really know who they are selling the pills to.

Between 2022 and 2024 alone, there have been several reports of men and women buying abortion pills online to intentionally cause an abortion for a pregnant woman without her consent and knowledge. These are just a few examples that have been reported:

A Texas man was sentenced to 180 days in jail for <u>attempting to kill his preborn daughter</u> seven times in 2022 by crushing misoprostol and adding it to his wife's drinks. Thankfully the baby survived but has had several health complications since she was born 10 weeks premature.

In May 2023, a woman <u>attempted to bribe her ex-boyfriend to kill his preborn child</u> by giving his current and pregnant girlfriend an abortion pill without her knowledge. The father rejected this offer and turned the ex-girlfriend in to authorities instead. According to news reports, the ex-girlfriend admitted that "she got the pill from a virtual doctor online and knew it was an abortion pill."

Another instance occurred when a Massachusetts man was accused in May 2024 of deceiving his pregnant girlfriend into taking "iron pills." The pills turned out to be misoprostol, which killed their preborn child.

Given the easy accessibility of obtaining abortion pills from illegal distributors, it is no surprise how simple it is for men and abusers to kill preborn children and hurt their mothers. The FDA and US Postal Service are turning a blind eye toward this reality. For example, the FDA has neglected to include the rogue providers that sell mifepristone on its list of illegally operating online pharmacies in recent years (See Appendix III).

The Pathway to the 'Cartel'

OTHER METHODS OF ABORTION PILL DISTRIBUTION

Method 1: In-Person Clinics/Pharmacies

Prior to 2023, the FDA only allowed the distribution of abortion pills by a certified in-person medical clinic, with a temporary pause of this regulation for six months during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in 2023, the FDA made an official ruling to allow abortion pills to be mailed via the United States Postal Service, as long as the abortion provider is certified under the FDA's Mifepristone REMS (Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy) program. Because of this ruling, numerous in-person clinics can now prescribe abortion pills to women by sending them through the mail. This ruling also permitted FDA-certified pharmacies, such as CVS and Walgreens, to sell mifepristone via medical prescription.

Plan C shows that as of 2024, 36 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands permit in-person clinics to prescribe abortion pills to women.

Method 2: Telemedicine

The claim that abortion pills are <u>illegal</u> to obtain in 14 states is false. The FDA's 2023 ruling to permanently allow the <u>mailing of abortion pills</u> has opened the floodgates for clinicians to prescribe abortion pills everywhere. Additionally, seven states have instituted abortion <u>shield laws</u>, which protect abortion providers from any legal repercussions when the providers prescribe abortion pills via telemedicine to women in abortion-restricted states. In order to acquire the abortion pills via telemedicine, women must complete either a video or online form consultation with an abortionist, who will then prescribe and mail the pills to the woman.

These shield laws work in conjunction with the FDA's abortion pill dispensary ruling. Abortionists in a shield-law-protected state (e.g., <u>California</u>) can legally prescribe and mail the abortion pill to women in states with abortion regulations. For instance, if a woman lives in an abortion-restricted state such as Texas (which <u>permits</u> abortion in the exceptions of the mother's life and the physical health of the mother), she can get the pills from a Californian abortionist without issue. Thus, telemedicine/online clinic visits and shield laws make it possible for abortionists to provide <u>abortion pills in all</u> 50 US states, five US territories, and the District of Columbia, no matter the state's abortion restrictions.

Thirteen Planned Parenthood affiliates use their telemedicine services to sell abortion pills, and some of these affiliates do so through an information form via its cell phone app. Aid Access provides the deadly pills in all 50 states with its online form consultation, and it even provides abortion pills "for future use." In these cases, anyone, regardless of their age or gender, can request abortion pills without having to see and speak directly with a provider. An NPR report states, "Patients who are up to 10 weeks pregnant can fill out screening questions on the Planned Parenthood Direct app any time of the day and provide an Illinois address where their medication abortion pills mifepristone and misoprostol would be mailed if they qualify. **That could be a house, or a hotel.**" (emphasis added)



Abortion by mail

- · Your online abortion pills are prescribed by US providers.
- . Shipping takes 1-5 days for all 50 states in the U.S.
- Each package will contain 1 mifepristone tablet and 12 misoprostol tablets. (click here to find out how to use the pills)
- . The service costs \$150.
- Click on the button below, to start answer 15 questions about your situation, health and address.
- · The person who needs the medication has to answer the questions!
- · We will send you an email.
- · You need to reply with a copy of your ID or other document you have.
- · We will email information about how you can pay. We can provide some funding if needed.
- · We do not share any information about you with others!
- The help desk and providers are there to support you through email: info@aidaccess.org

Click here to start your order

A top provider of abortion pills through "telemedicine," Aid Access proudly provides abortion drugs to all 50 states. https://aidaccess.org/en/i-need-an-abortion Accessed: June 5, 2024

Method 3: Online Vendors

Online vendors are neither monitored nor approved by the US government and remain undisturbed. Plan C <u>describes</u> website vendors that sell abortion pills, saying, "Websites that sell pills are e-commerce websites that sell and ship pills to addresses in all US states. They do not require a prescription for the medications, do not require you to upload your ID, and do not provide a medical consultation or any kind of support."

These websites charge anywhere from \$30–\$500 for abortion pills and kits and even <u>suggest</u> that one can "buy pills now to use later" should a woman ever miss her period and want to take mifepristone "just in case." Plan C also <u>says</u> that while they label these websites as legitimate, these websites "sell generic abortion pills that are not regulated or inspected by the US government." It goes on to say, "Plan C regularly tests these websites by buying pills from them. The services we list in our guide all shipped pills to a home address. The pills were real (based on laboratory testing). **But, we do not operate these sites, and cannot guarantee they will be reliable in the future**." (emphasis added)

This means that without identification and a prescription, anyone can order these pills from an online vendor to use themselves or on women who are pregnant. Because the abortion pills provided by online vendors are not inspected or approved by the FDA, no one can be certain what the pills contain, how they will affect the mother's health, and where to even trace the origins of the abortion pills.

What Is Being Done about This Crisis?

Articles about the illegal widespread accessibility of abortion pills have been written in <u>The New York Times</u>, on <u>PBS</u>, and in <u>The Daily Wire</u>, yet where is the outrage and action in response? In the first of these articles, the author even <u>notes</u>, "Enforcement remains rare. Over the years, the occasional Aid Access package has been confiscated by customs agents, but the service has remained largely untouched. Experts say a federal crackdown on patients ordering abortion pills—even those arriving from overseas—is unlikely."

The FDA provides a current <u>list</u> of warning letters to online pharmacy groups who are illegally selling prescription drugs, as well as individual <u>letters</u> to online vendors selling unapproved or mislabeled drugs. In contrast, this is the FDA's <u>response</u> to online abortion pill vendors selling abortion pills illegally:

The FDA does not recommend purchasing mifepristone outside of the Mifepristone REMS Program – e.g. buying it online or personally transporting it from a foreign country. If a person does so, they would be bypassing important safeguards specifically designed to protect their health. Prescription medicines that are approved for use in the United States have been reviewed for safety, effectiveness, and quality by the FDA, and are subject to FDA-regulated manufacturing controls, including inspection of manufacturing facilities. Generally, prescription medicines purchased from foreign sources are not the FDA-approved versions. The FDA does not have regulatory oversight of prescription medicines from outside the legitimate US drug supply chain; therefore, the FDA cannot ensure the safety, effectiveness, or quality of those medications.

Rather than taking action against these providers in recent years, the FDA recommends that women not order the abortion pills from non-FDA approved sources.

Possible Legal Actions to Be Taken

The issue of exploding access to abortion pills is not an easy fix. However, American Life League has identified possible avenues of action that could be taken, should government agencies that are charged with protecting the American people take an interest in this report.

The first possible solution would be for Border Patrol to bar unauthorized packages of pills from crossing the nation's border. In many cases, these pills arrive in unlabeled packages, with some even reading "Anti-Preg Kit" on the outside (Appendix III). Such obvious signs of illegal drugs crossing our border should not be ignored. If illegal shipment is addressed, we can potentially save women and babies from these harmful drugs.

The second possible solution would be for the Department of Homeland Security to tackle this issue head on. DHS, charged with protecting Americans at home, has a vested interest in shielding American citizens from dangerous materials that cross our nation's borders.

Just as our government agencies work to protect Americans from harmful narcotics such as fentanyl, the same concern should be given to women who are being sold foreign abortion pills. We know approximately how many Americans die from fentanyl each year. Why don't we know how many women are killed by the abortion pill regimen?

Along with calling for action to protect women, American Life League calls on our nation's government to require correct and consistent reporting on deaths from the abortion pill regimen.

Conclusion

The abortion pill drug cartel is alive and well, especially in so-called "abortion-free" states. These networks aim to groom vulnerable women on how to obtain these pills secretly. These community networks work to traffic the pills across our nation's border right under the noses of federal agencies like Border Patrol and DHS.

With evidence of women being drugged with these pills and sky-high abortion rates, we must question why our federal agencies, charged with keeping United States citizens safe from drug trafficking, turn a blind eye to this crisis.

As mentioned previously, the latest reports showed that 63% of abortions are committed via these pills. However, with this percentage only coming from "in-network healthcare systems," this does not include the abortions committed through the cartel networks. Therefore, ALL can safely assume that rather than pills accounting for 63% of all abortions, the number is significantly higher, and we estimate it is closer to 80 or 90%.

With the easy access to abortion pills from both certified and third-party sources, we must acknowledge that there is not an "abortion-free" state, city, or town in the United States.

Abortion regulations are useless in ending this problem. By placing arbitrary numbers and limits on when a baby can be killed in the womb, we continue to waste time in the fight to protect all preborn children from abortion. So-called "pro-life" laws have merely proclaimed to people that we are only prolife to a point and that we are willing to compromise our values for laws that protect only some children in certain cases. These laws have not helped us in moving forward and abolishing abortion for good.

The horrifying reality we are facing is that while in-person clinics may not be able to perform abortions depending on the circumstances in various states, women are able to get abortions without leaving their homes through the abortion pill, despite their state's regulations. Not only does this abortion method continue to increase, but because there is no proper tracking of abortion pill numbers, we have no idea how many abortions are occurring from the pills. If we continue to celebrate abortion regulations as successes in stopping abortion, we will continue to waste time in our efforts going forward and allow more preborn children to be murdered.

This report is proof that the claim of the abortion-free state, or pro-life state, is a myth. As long as the abortion pill regimen is trafficked across our nation's borders into heavily restricted states, abortion numbers will continue to rise. And as there is no required reporting, we will continue to be left in the dark regarding how many women's and children's lives are claimed by the abortion pill crisis.

Methodology

This research was conducted throughout May and June 2024. All data was obtained from public information. All facts were found from public articles, legal rulings, Plan C's website, abortion pill resource websites, Abortion Finder's website, the Guttmacher Institute's website, and sub-Reddit threads associated with abortion pills. State-by-state abortion laws were confirmed by Guttmacher's most updated information on abortion regulations in each state. Questions about this report should be addressed to Katherine Van Dyke at kvandyke@all.org.

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Cofounded in 1979 by Judie Brown and nine other dedicated pro-life Americans, ALL is the oldest grassroots Catholic pro-life education organization in the United States. American Life League is a 501(c)(3) organization committed to the protection of all innocent human beings from the moment of creation to death and is rooted in pro-life integrity that stands up for every innocent human being—from the single cell human embryo to the elderly, the infirm, and others at risk of having their life terminated by acts of euthanasia—whose life is threatened by what Saint John Paul II called "the culture of death." ALL's vision is a world where every human being's life is treated with respect, compassion, and love from the moment of creation until death.

Our focus is on providing truth-based educational materials and opportunities, inspiring and equipping generations to act for God and life, and protecting and caring for the most vulnerable among us. That includes the defenseless, the lost, and those who hurt and live in despair.

Are you inspired to help support our work?

Donate online at www.ALL.org/donate or by phone at 540-659-4171!

APPENDIX I

What Is the Abortion Pill Regimen?

The abortion pill regimen consists of two drugs: <u>mifepristone and misoprostol</u>. The FDA warns women to use these pills prior to 10 weeks gestation, though many abortion providers stretch this warning and say women can use the pills at <u>11 weeks gestation</u>. The pregnant mom first takes 200mg of mifepristone by mouth. Mifepristone cuts off the supply of progesterone created by the mother's body, a natural hormone her preborn baby needs to grow. The baby then starves to death in the womb.

Then, 24–48 hours later, <u>800mcg (3–4 doses)</u> of the second pill, misoprostol, is taken to cause the mother's body to contract and expel the dead baby from her womb. This "self-managed" method of abortion is cruelly designed to kill a preborn child under the guise of doing so in the "comfort" of one's own home.

While this regimen is labeled by the FDA and other medical institutions as a normal and "<u>safe</u>" self-managed procedure for women, mifepristone and misoprostol end the life of the preborn child and are dangerous to the mother.

APPENDIX II

Image of Hiding Personal Data



This image from Digital Defense Fund shows how one can hide their data on a cell phone when searching for and ordering abortion pills.

https://digitaldefensefund.org/ddf-guides/abortion-privacy Accessed: June 6, 2024

APPENDIX III

FDA's Warning Letters Exclude Mifepristone

The FDA provides a <u>list</u> of "rogue online pharmacies" that illegally sell prescription drugs. Included in this list are the following violations of the US Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act:

- offering for sale unapproved prescription drugs of unknown origin, safety, and effectiveness
- offering prescription drugs without a prescription
- offering prescription drugs without adequate directions for safe use
- offering prescription drugs without FDA-required warnings to consumers about the serious health risks associated with the prescription drug

The FDA goes on to say: "Buying prescription drugs from rogue online pharmacies can be dangerous, or even deadly. FDA recommends that consumers do not purchase prescription drugs from the websites listed below."

The community partners and online vendors that sell and ship mifepristone have not been included on the FDA's "warning" list since 2019, even though they offer unapproved prescription drugs of unknown origin, send mifepristone without a prescription, and are not FDA approved. For example, Red State Access recommends a third-party site that sells "Anti-Preg Kits," which are mifepristone and misoprostol drugs that are not FDA approved and come from a pharmacy in India.



This abortion kit from India is currently for sale on a third-party site recommended by Red State Access. https://www.medside24.com/product-page/prepper-kits Accessed: June 5, 2024

APPENDIX IV

Abortion Pill Access by State

STATE	In	Direct	CHASE ME Via Telehealth³	'Plan C'
Alabama		✓	✓	✓
Alaska	√	✓	✓	
Arizona	✓	✓	✓	✓
American Samo	a	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Arkansas		\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
California	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	
Colorado	✓	✓	✓	
Connecticut	✓	✓	✓	
Delaware	✓	√	✓	
Florida	✓	✓	✓	✓
Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Guam		✓	✓	✓
Hawaii	✓	✓	✓	
Idaho		✓	✓	√
Illinois	✓	✓	✓	
Indiana		✓	✓	√
Iowa	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kansas	√	✓	✓	✓
Kentucky		✓	✓	√
Louisiana		✓	✓	√
Maine	√	√	√	
Maryland	√	√	✓	
Massachusetts	√	√	√	
Michigan	✓	√	✓	
Minnesota	√	√	✓	
Mississippi		√	✓	√
Missouri		√	✓	√
Montana	√	√	✓	
Nebraska	✓	✓	✓	✓

STATE A	AVAILA	BLE PURC	CHASE ME	
	In	Direct	Via	'Plan C'
	Person ¹	from Web ²	Telehealth ³	Network
Nevada	✓	✓	✓	
New Hampshire	✓	✓	✓	
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓	
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓	
New York	✓	✓	✓	
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓
North Dakota		✓	✓	✓
Northern Mariana Islands	a	√	√	√
Ohio	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oklahoma		✓	✓	✓
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	
Pennsylvania	✓	✓	✓	✓
Puerto Rico	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	
South Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓
South Dakota		✓	✓	✓
Tennessee		✓	✓	✓
Texas		✓	✓	✓
US Virgin Islands	✓	✓	✓	✓
Utah	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vermont	✓	✓	✓	
Virginia	\checkmark	\checkmark	✓	\checkmark
Washington	\checkmark	✓	✓	
Washington, DC	✓	✓	✓	
West Virginia		✓	√	✓
Wisconsin	✓	✓	√	✓
Wyoming	✓	✓	✓	✓
TOTAL	39	56	56	33

- 1 In-person facilities that offer pill abortions for pickup and consultation.
- 2 E-commerce websites that sell and ship pills to addresses in all US states and its territories. They do not require a prescription or ID and do not provide consultation.
- 3 Online facilities that employ US-licensed clinicians and ship pills after a brief online form or phone/video chat. Aid Access (recommended on Plan C's website) sends abortion pills to all 50 states via telehealth consultation.
- 4 Networks of community-based volunteers who ship generic abortion pills to people in the US. They believe in a model of community care and ship pills for free. The pills often come repackaged in plastic or mylar baggies.