

SERVICES

PRACTICAL SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

ACCESS has over 200 practical support volunteers throughout California that are able to offer our callers rides to and from reproductive healthcare appointments, lodging for those traveling from afar to an appointment, childcare for those traveling with children, translation (primarily Spanish, but other languages may be available upon inquiry), gas money drop off for those driving, and almost anything else someone may logistically need to make it to their appointment and back home. All of our volunteers go through a vetting process which includes an extensive application, interview, reference check, and training process. This network allows us to serve more callers in more areas. It also means that our services are not guaranteed due to the nature of being volunteer-based.

ABORTION DOULAS (Bay Area Only)

ACCESS has partnered with Bay Area Doula Project to expand the skillset of our Practical Support Volunteers to better meet the needs of our callers. Not all of our callers share the same language when inquiring about ACCESS services but our Healthline Operators are trained to recognize signs of an emotional support request and offer these services to our callers when appropriate. ACCESS will then facilitate the process of connecting a caller with a doula in the Bay Area. ACCESS is currently seeking similar partnerships with other doula groups in other areas of California.

FUNDING

We have a small monthly fund called the “Women in Need” Fund. Through our WIN Fund, we offer small pledges to people seeking funding that have exhausted all other options to pay for their reproductive healthcare. This includes but is not limited to: people who do not qualify for Medi-Cal, minors, people financially dependent on an unsafe relationship, and/or people seeking an abortion whose gestational age is 24 weeks or more and are forced to travel outside of the state. Because our funding is limited, we cannot fully fund all of someone’s appointment costs nor can we always pledge any amount to all callers, but when we do, we hope to work in partnership with clinics and/or providers to streamline services. It’s best for someone to call us as soon as possible so we can work with them on coordinating services and meeting their needs.

REFERRAL SERVICES & ADVOCACY

The Healthline offers referrals to reliable organizations that can help with other issues a caller may be facing, such as intimate partner/domestic violence, sexual assault, substance use, homelessness, child-care needs, or job discrimination.

INSURANCE ASSISTANCE

We also connect people with public insurance programs that pay for reproductive healthcare like FamilyPACT, Medi-Cal for Pregnancy, Minor Consent Medi-Cal, and other insurance programs. We offer strategies for self-advocacy.

FOR YOUR CLINIC

ACCESS has a very comprehensive list of reproductive healthcare providers for the state of California, as well as the services they provide. Much of this information has been gathered through working with providers directly, while other info has been found through your website, or online searches. Every year we do our best to reach out to providers to update their information but many times we do not hear back from providers. We encourage participation from all California reproductive healthcare providers to ensure a smooth streamline of services to our callers. You don’t have to wait until we reach out. Please email xxxxxxxxx@accesswhj.org to update your information and/or to be sent an electronic questionnaire.

IS YOUR STAFF INTERESTED IN KNOWING MORE ABOUT ACCESS?

We are invested in building relationships with California providers to better streamline services for our callers and your patients as best as we can. If you would like to have an in-clinic training about the work we do please email us at xxxxxxxxx@accesswhj.org or call us at 000.000.0000

WOULD YOU LIKE TO START A PRACTICAL SUPPORT NETWORK IN YOUR AREA?

If you are interested in beginning a practical support network in your area please email us at xxxxxxxxx@accesswhj.org or call us at 000.000.0000

ACCESS STAFF

Firstname Lastname – Healthline Program Director

Firstname became Healthline Program Director in 2015. She is currently working on building relationships with providers as well as volunteer engagement. You can reach Firstname at xxxxxxxxx@accesswhj.org

Firstname Lastname – Healthline Manager

Firstname joined the ACCESS team in 2018. She currently oversees the day-to-day operations of our Healthline, including caller support. You can reach Firstname at xxxxxxxxx@accesswhj.org

Firstname Lastname – Finance and Operations Manager

Firstname joined ACCESS in 2018. She manages the finances of the organization including caller pledges. You can reach Firstname at xxxxxxxxx@accesswhj.org

Firstname Lastname – Movement Building Director

Firstname joined the ACCESS team in 2016. She currently oversees our outreach, organizing efforts, and caller engagement as well as our policy work. You can reach Firstname at xxxxxxxxx@accesswhj.org

INFORMATION

for PROVIDERS and ADVOCATES

access

WOMEN’S HEALTH JUSTICE

*Information • Referral
Advocacy • Practical Support*

BILINGUAL HEALTHLINE

English Hotline Number
000-000-0000

Spanish Hotline Number
000-000-0000

Direct Line for Providers
000-000-0000

After-Hours Line for Providers
000-000-0000

Fax
000-000-0000

P.O. BOX 0000, Oakland, CA 00000

www.accesswhj.org

WHO WE ARE

ACCESS Women’s Health Justice works to remove barriers and increase access to sexual and reproductive health care in California while building power to demand health, justice, and dignity.

Through our Healthline (hotline), ACCESS offers free, confidential and unbiased peer counseling, information, referrals, and advocacy. We provide honest information about all reproductive health services—including abortion, birth control, pregnancy, prenatal care, pap smears and gynecological care, infertility, and STI testing and treatment—and judgement-free support in accessing those services.

WHO WE SERVE

We serve anyone living in California or traveling to and from California for reproductive health services. Most of our callers are folks in their second trimester/early third trimester and are seeking abortion services. Many of our callers have faced barriers in trying to access reproductive healthcare. This includes but is not limited to:

- Facing bias when trying to access public insurance programs like Minor Consent Medi-Cal or Medi-Cal for Pregnancy-related services
- Being told they are high risk and cannot be seen at their local clinic
- Being too far along to be seen at their closest clinic
- Lack of translation/services in the patient’s language
- Not having a support person to check them out of their appointment in accordance with some clinics’ policies

These are just some of the barriers our callers face and why they call our Healthline, seeking ways to get the healthcare they need.

WHAT WE HEAR ON THE HEALTHLINE

Oftentimes our callers do not have factual information about accessing health services, which may result in delaying timely access to care.

“I didn’t know I could get Emergency Medi-Cal”

Many people call us because they falsely believe they have exhausted all avenues of financial assistance to help them pay for care, and just don’t know their full range of options. Other callers get turned away from clinics because their personal insurance does not cover abortion care but Emergency Medi-Cal or Medi-Cal for Pregnancy are options when their primary insurance does not cover abortion care.

“My provider didn’t tell me the cost would go up if I waited any longer”

Some of our callers are told their abortion can cost \$400-\$600 (for first trimester abortions) and leave thinking that’s how much they have to raise. By the time they come up with the cash, weeks may have passed, and the price has increased, but no one told them that would happen.

“The doctor told me I couldn’t be seen there because I was high risk”

Although there may be a provider in the caller’s area that can see them, their high risk mandates that they be seen at a larger facility, such as a hospital. This can be overwhelming for people having to travel long distances. ACCESS is here to help with travel costs and logistics.

“I have Medi-Cal and Medicare and my provider will not see me”

Many providers do not see people who have Medi-Cal insurance. We make referrals to providers who can accept Medi-Cal patients. Providers, please let us know if you accept Medi-Cal.

MYTHS ABOUT ACCESS

Our Healthline Operators have heard many myths on the types of services ACCESS can provide. Some of these myths include:

MYTH - “ACCESS will fund your whole procedure”

ACCESS does not have an infinite amount of funds and cannot guarantee that we can cover the majority of people’s reproductive healthcare costs. We provide smaller portion pledges in order to be able to financially support as many people as we can.

MYTH - “ACCESS will put you up in a hotel for as many nights as you need”

We will try our best to get a hotel if absolutely needed during our callers’ procedure, but rely heavily on volunteers first. We cannot guarantee either of these services if we run out of funds for the month. If someone needs longer-term housing support, we will look up a reliable resource that we can refer our callers to.

MYTH - “ACCESS will provide you with services, even if it’s last minute, guaranteed!”

We do our best to coordinate logistical needs by tapping into our Practical Support Volunteer Network first. If we can’t find a ride through our PSV network then we tap into our Women in Need Fund to purchase a ride share, like Uber or Lyft. Because of this, we need as much advance notice as possible. This is especially important if a support person is required for checking out of the appointment. We cannot provide last-minute rides, unless a ride share is OK with the provider. We also can’t always guarantee those rides due to our budget. It is best that the patient calls us as soon as they know they will need support in navigating this process. Because we work with volunteers we never advertise our services as guaranteed.

MYTH - “ACCESS will reimburse you for all of your logistical costs”

ACCESS seeks to utilize its resources by funding as many callers possible in the most equitable and sustainable way. To this end we cannot reimburse folks for logistical expenses already incurred by the time they have called us. In the spirit of supporting people in making their choice a reality, we always hope to create an intake by speaking with the patient directly to ensure that they are not being coerced into a decision they don’t want to make. Once we create an intake, we look into our budget to see how much financial support we can offer. Estimated costs are taken into account and our budget is adjusted daily.

HOW PROVIDERS CAN SUPPORT

The ACCESS team strongly believes that we can all work together to better serve our callers and your patients. By working together we can lessen the time it takes for someone to access care, prevent termination cost increases, confusion, and ultimately remove barriers to reproductive healthcare. Below are a couple of examples of situations that we continuously run into and cannot always find a solution to. We are always open to hearing ideas and strategies on how to support folks in complicated situations, especially if you have successfully supported a patient in getting the care they need.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Although California has some of the strongest laws in the country, implementing and enforcing those laws is a long and ongoing process, and many continue to fail our most vulnerable communities. Some instances in which good-intentioned programs/policies have not served our callers are the following:

Medi-Cal covers transportation

Under AB2394, Medi-Cal beneficiaries can authorize non-emergency transportation services for Medi-Cal obtained services, including abortion care. Many of our callers, providers and advocates do not know about this. Transportation includes roundtrip rides for a beneficiary and a support person, such as an attendant, parent or partner, to obtain covered Medi-Cal services such as an appointment and picking up prescriptions or medical equipment. This is crucial for providers located in areas where there is little to no public transportation available, including Ubers or Lyfts. If you come across patients who may benefit from this service, they will need to call their county’s Member Services to request this service. They can find their county’s numbers by visiting: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Pages/MMCDHealthPlanDir.aspx> As always, ACCESS is happy to help support your patients in navigating this process.

Medicare Medi-Cal

Some of our callers have dual insurance, either through a parent’s or partner’s insurance and it is always a maze to help folks get the care they need if their primary insurance does not cover abortions. One instance we run into is when people are insured through Medicare and Medi-Cal. Medicare tends to be the default primary insurance for all callers who have both, and Medicare does not cover abortions. We have heard our callers navigate this process in various ways but one way providers can help is by providing a ‘denial of services’ letter to the patient in order for Medi-Cal to become the default insurer, thus covering the abortion costs. We have a few successful cases of providers who have done this. If you have more information on how to best navigate this process, we would love to hear from you.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FUNDING SERVICES

National Abortion Federation

The NAF Hotline Fund operates the largest national, toll-free, multi-lingual hotline for abortion referrals and financial assistance in the U.S. and Canada.

Phone Number

000.000.0000

Hours

Mon - Fri 4:00 AM to 8:00 PM PST
Sat & Sun 6:00 AM to 2:00 PM PST

National Network of Abortion Funds – The Tiller Fund

People can be referred to this hotline for additional abortion funding support.

Phone Number

000.000.0000 extension 1

COUNSELING SERVICES

All-Options

The All-Options Talkline is a place where all options, decisions, experiences, and feelings are welcomed and respected, at any point in someone’s pregnancy related journey.

Phone Number

000.000.0000

Hours

Mon - Fri 7:00AM to 10:00PM
Sat & Sun 7:00AM to 3:00PM