

Minors Seeking Abortion in Tennessee

Anyone under the age of 18 who wants an abortion in Tennessee must:

- Get *written consent from a parent or guardian* prior to receiving abortion care;¹
- A waiver is available in a *medical emergency, if the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, or if the teen comes from a home with documented instances of abuse and/or neglect*;²
- Understand that there is a process called *judicial bypass which allows a minor to ask a judge for approval for an abortion instead of obtaining parental consent*. Most minors talk through obtaining an abortion with their parents or guardians, but a minor may seek a judicial bypass for a number of reasons, including maturity, the threat of violence in the home, or a pregnancy that is a result of rape or incest. The judicial bypass process involves the minor filing a request with a local court for a confidential hearing before a judge.³

If you are working with a minor who wishes to obtain judicial bypass instead of obtaining parental consent, contacting the clinic is the best first step. The clinic can help the minor navigate the judicial system and find an attorney. The clinic will walk the minor through the judicial bypass process, provide them with the required documentation, and give them information about filing a request with the court.

¹ Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 37-10-301-307; Guttmacher State Policies in Brief, Parental Involvement in Minor's Abortion, Sept. 1, 2015, available at http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_PIMA.pdf

² *Id.*

³ Tenn. Code Ann. § 37-10-304.

