

Extended Contraceptive Coverage as Violence Prevention

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Currently, healthcare insurers in Alaska only provide coverage for 1 to 3 months of contraceptives at a time, and can impose non-medically-related restrictions on which type of contraception will be covered (e.g., step-therapy). Senate Bill 27 (SB27; "CONTRACEPTIVES COVERAGE:INSURE;MED ASSIST") would require that healthcare insurers extend coverage for up to 12 months, and cover the contraception of the patient's preference. This fact sheet summarizes the complex relationship between ease of contraceptive access and intimate partner violence, making the case for extended coverage because of the disproportionate impact of access limitations on victims of abuse and because of the risk for future violent victimization posed by these limitations.

- **Almost half of Alaskan women (48.3%) have had partners who control what they can do and where they can go,¹ which can make regular trips to a medical provider and/or pharmacy difficult.** These controlling behaviors include monitoring and controlling who a partner can associate with, what they eat and wear, where they go and when, and their access to and use of money.
- **Almost one in five of Alaskan women (18.8%) have experienced reproductive control in their lifetime, which makes ease of access to contraceptives even more essential for reducing unintended pregnancies.** This includes partners trying to get them pregnant when they did not want to be or trying to stop them from using birth control; and/or partners refusing to use a condom when they wanted to use one.
- **Alaskan women are also at high risk for intimate partner sexual assault, thus increasing their risk for unintended pregnancies, particularly if there is a lapse in their preferred contraception regime due to access burdens.** Almost one in five (18.0%) women from an unweighted sample of nearly 13,000 adult Alaskan women had been sexually assaulted by an intimate partner.
- **Getting pregnant puts women at an increased risk for violent victimization, particularly for women already in abusive relationships.**
 - Qualitative research has demonstrated that abusive partners will attempt to forcibly impregnate their partners to keep them from leaving the relationship.²
 - Pregnancy increases women's risk of being a victim of homicide,³ and Alaska has the highest rate of women killed by men in the US, with a rate that is more than twice the national average.⁴

¹ University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center. (n.d.). *Detailed intimate partner abuse results*. <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/justice-center/avs/avs-results/intimate-partner-abuse-results.cshtml>

² Grace, K. T., & Anderson, J. C. (2018). Reproductive Coercion: A Systematic Review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 19*(4), 371–390. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838016663935>

³ Wallace, M. E., PhD, Hoyert, D., PhD, Williams, C., ScD, & Mendola, P., PhD. (2016). Pregnancy-associated homicide and suicide in 37 US states with enhanced pregnancy surveillance. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, 215*(3), 364.e1-364.e10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2016.03.040>

⁴ Violence Policy Center. (2022). *When men murder women: An analysis of 2020 homicide data*. <https://vpc.org/when-men-murder-women/>