

AP Producer News

Regence/Asuris Statement on U.S. Supreme Court Decision

June 28, 2022

Dear Valued Producer,

Because you work with groups enrolled in Regence BlueShield and/or Asuris Northwest Health through Advanced Professionals Insurance and Benefit Solutions, we wanted to make sure you were aware of the below producer communication delivered last week by Regence/Asuris:

The U.S. Supreme court issued its decision June 24, 2022, in a case that affects abortion services. As expected, the decision overturned Roe v. Wade, the 1973 ruling that the Constitution protects a pregnant woman's right to choose to have an abortion. That ruling prohibited states from banning the procedure before fetal viability, about 23 weeks.

We recognize there are many questions about coverage of abortion services that have already been raised since a draft of the decision was leaked several weeks ago. It will take time to fully analyze the implications for health plans given the patchwork of differing state laws – some states have full bans on any type of abortion services; other states have strengthened the right to abortion access. The analysis will be ongoing and dependent on the pace at which states continue to change their laws.

As questions arise, please continue to help set expectations about the complexity and know that our legal teams and others are working as quickly as possible on the analysis.

Washington explicitly preserves the legality of abortion and requires fully insured health plans to cover services. Washington's Initiative 120 (1991), passed by voters, also affirmed women's choice. Gov. Jay Inslee said in response to the court's recently leaked draft opinion that he would explore further codifying abortion rights into law through the constitution. Washington coverage includes usual member cost shares per their benefits.

We will continue to work on answers to the most pressing questions and distribute those as quickly as possible, knowing many answers will take much longer to confirm after further legal analysis and business decisions are made. If you or your groups have questions you want to make sure we have captured, you may submit them to us.

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