



New evidence shows abortion funds are critical for people most burdened by restrictive abortion care legislation in the South

A team of researchers and advocates analyzed abortion fund data to examine the characteristics of people seeking support for abortion services in the U.S. Southeast

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Atlanta, Ga. -- Abortion funds help reduce financial and geographic barriers to abortion care for people most burdened by restrictive abortion legislation, says new research conducted by Emory University Center for Reproductive Health Research in the Southeast (RISE) and Access Reproductive Care - Southeast (ARC-Southeast).

The study, [published](#) in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, examined nearly 10,000 cases involving calls to ARC-Southeast, an abortion fund that provides financial and logistical support for people seeking abortion care in the region.

The RISE and ARC-Southeast study team found that callers mirrored groups that are most burdened by legislation that restricts abortion access: the vast majority identified as Black and were 18 to 34 years-old, uninsured or publicly insured, and had at least one child already.

Whitney S. Rice, DrPH, MPH, the study's lead author and director of RISE said, "This study adds to limited understanding of who is seeking support for accessing abortion care in the face of structural barriers to affordable, reachable reproductive health services, particularly in the South."

"We know that the people who are calling abortion funds, it's not just that they can't afford their abortion, they oftentimes can't afford rent, they can't afford utilities, they can't afford daycare, they can't afford groceries. This is just another item on their long list of things that they can't afford," said Quita Tinsley Peterson, study co-author and ARC-Southeast co-director.

Spanning from 2017 to 2019, the majority of the calls were from Georgia, followed by Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Florida, and South Carolina. Most callers (64 percent) were no more than ten weeks along in their pregnancy. And while a greater portion of cases (48 percent) were among people who resided within 24 miles of their abortion clinic, a substantial 23 percent was greater than 100 miles from their clinic.

Oriaku Njoku, the study's co-author and ARC-Southeast co-founder said, "We know there are incredibly diverse communities in all of the states in our region. This data shows us there are gaps in service provision when we are not reaching people in those communities. We are now looking to do more targeted outreach in those communities to provide language access and to train practical support volunteers that can provide culturally relevant support."

The authors of the study are Whitney S. Rice, DrPH (Director) and Katie Labgold (Fellow) at RISE, Emory University; Quita Tinsley Peterson (Co-Director) and Oriaku Njoku (Co-Founder and Executive Director) at ARC-Southeast; and Megan Higdon (Independent Researcher).

About the Center for Reproductive Health Research in the Southeast (RISE)

RISE is a collaborative center housed at Emory University that seeks to improve reproductive health and equity of people in the U.S. Southeast through transdisciplinary research that informs social, systems, and policy change. We aim to train future professionals at all educational levels to go into reproductive health, rights, and justice fields with knowledge of research and its utility in their work. We also aim to increase the praxis of research justice through the conduct of and capacity building for stakeholder-centered and participatory research. Media requests can be sent to RISE@emory.edu.

About Access Reproductive Care - Southeast

“We provide funding and logistical support to ensure Southerners receive safe and compassionate reproductive care including abortion services. Through education and leadership development we build power in communities of color to abolish stigma and restore dignity and justice.”