



## ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

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### Respect Life Apostolate Statement on Missouri's Abortion Status - Jan. 20, 2021

The Respect Life Apostolate (RLA) of the Archdiocese of St. Louis is grateful for the “*united ethical effort*” in Missouri that has so tirelessly worked to end abortion and the other hallmarks of the culture of death in our state. Since the RLA’s founding in 1973 shortly after the tragic Roe v. Wade/Doë v. Bolton U.S. Supreme Court decisions, the Apostolate has been blessed to work with other pro-life leaders and organizations to that end.

Reports have recently circulated signaling that Missouri may be the first “abortion free” or “abortion clinic free” state in the nation. These reports claim that the last free-standing abortion facility in the state, Reproductive Health Services of Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region (RHS of PPSLR), has apparently stopped doing abortions in St. Louis since at least Nov. 1, 2020. The Respect Life Apostolate encourages caution regarding this claim and steadfastness in our continued efforts to end abortion.

- The RHS of PPSLR is still a legally licensed abortion facility by the state of Missouri. The facility and its staff are still ready, willing, and able to perform abortions (1)
- A December 2020 analysis of state and national abortion data found the following (2):
  - A 23.9 percent decrease in Missouri abortions overall from 2018 to 2019
  - Missouri remains among the states with the lowest abortion numbers
  - Missouri is one of six states with only one abortion facility, RHS of PPSLR
  - Abortions at that facility have sharply declined
- A January 2021 article found that abortions on Missouri women and unborn children are still occurring (3):
  - The Missouri Department of Health reports 39 abortions between Jan.1 and Nov. 15, 2020.
  - RHS of PPSLR reports no abortions for December 2020.
  - Even if no abortions happen at the St. Louis facility in a given timeframe, Missouri women who go there are still being sent to the Planned Parenthood Fairview Heights Health Center in Illinois for surgical and chemical abortions.
- Beyond Planned Parenthood, abortions are still being offered in Missouri by at least one health system in the cases of perceived “fetal abnormalities” and perceived “maternal health conditions”/ “mother’s health being at risk” (4) and (5)

The Respect Life Apostolate encourages the pro-life community to stay focused on – and be encouraged by – the known documented successes instead of perceived ones. To reach Missouri women with the help they need to choose life, the RLA encourages the employment of effective existing strategies and the development of new ones based on sound research and results. The Apostolate invites the pro-life community to continue to pray and work together for the day when all unborn children are truly protected by law and welcomed into life.

1. <https://www.ksdk.com/article/news/local/planned-parenthood-st-louis-receives-license/63-7b5a8795-09b1-412a-9237-a58517ccf012>
2. <https://www.archstl.org/abortions-slightly-up-across-united-states-but-missouri-remains-among-states-with-lowest-numbers-5999>
3. [https://www.stltoday.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/health/planned-parenthood-fights-report-that-missouri-has-become-first-abortion-free-state-but-numbers-dwindling/article\\_0bde2802-a52d-5182-b944-70ad418223b4.html](https://www.stltoday.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/health/planned-parenthood-fights-report-that-missouri-has-become-first-abortion-free-state-but-numbers-dwindling/article_0bde2802-a52d-5182-b944-70ad418223b4.html)
4. <https://www.barnesjewish.org/Medical-Services/Women-Infants/Womens-Health-Services/Family-Planning>
5. <https://news.stlpublicradio.org/health-science-environment/2017-03-28/missouri-hospitals-forgo-family-planning-funds-as-abortion-rule-goes-into-effect>