



February, 2023 Clearinghouse on Women's Issues (CWI) Newsletter
<https://womensclearinghouse.org>

(Invitation to CWI Zoom Meeting, Tuesday, February 28, 2023 (12:00-1:30 PM))

“The Effect of COVID-19 on Women's Employment and Their Work Life Balance”

Tuesday, February 28, 2023, 12:00-1:30 pm via Zoom

[Registration Link](#)

Gender equality in women's employment was dealt a blow by COVID-19. While female participation in the labor force picked up after the pandemic's worst phase in 2020, it still remains under threat from risks that, if left unaddressed, could wash away the progress made in gender equality in the past decade. (Deloitte Insight, January 2022)

This meeting addressing COVID's impact on women's employment will be hosted by CWI's, **Dr. Alotta Taylor, Jeanette Lim Esbrook, Esq. and Ms. Sherry Klein.**

COVID-19's economic impact resulting in the widening gender disparity in the labor market has been a major worry. However, (Deloitte Insight, January 2022) stated with the pickup in economic activity since the second half of 2020 and a significant increase in the scale and pace of vaccinations around the world in 2021, female employment has recovered some of the lost ground. Yet this recovery isn't without risks. Moreover, in countries where women have traditionally lagged far behind men, returning to the job market after losing out in 2020 may prove harder for mothers who took up extensive childcare responsibilities during the pandemic. And as government aid fizzles out in many parts of the world, single parents will find it even more difficult to keep up with childcare and other household expenses. COVID also increased the viability of virtual work, but little is known about it's positive or negative impact on women.

This meeting will be informed by the following speakers who will present information on the impact of COVID-19 on women's employment and how return to work can be furthered by attention to policies such as increases in child-care options, virtual work options, and paid family leave.

Julie Vogtman (she/her), Director of Job Quality & Senior Counsel for the National Women's Law Center (NWLC). Vogtman will provide an overview of 3 years of COVID including a survey she made about a year ago at the 2-yr. mark. The topics of impact on women and employment include: Caregiving, finances, economic impact, policy solutions including family paid leave.

At NWLC, Julie engages in research, policy analysis and advocacy, and public education to advance federal and state policies that benefit both women in low-paid jobs and their families, including higher wages, fair work scheduling practices, and childcare assistance. She has written extensively about women and the economy and the factors contributing to racial and gender pay disparities, including as a co-author of NWLC's March 2022 report, *Resilient But Not Recovered: After Two Years of the COVID-19 Crisis, Women Are Still Struggling*. Julie Vogtman was quoted February 12, 2023 in a Washington Post article on women returning to work, “We are certainly seeing some very positive signs in the economy, but there are still disparities, both in and who is back to work and who is getting the best jobs,” referring to challenges such as paid sick leave and more affordable child care, that affect women of color and those with lower levels of education and income.

Prior to joining NWLC in 2010, Julie was an associate with Covington & Burling LLP in Washington, DC. She is a magna cum laude graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, where she served as an editor for the Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy, and holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from Furman University.

Allison Wolf will discuss the impact of balancing working as a professional remotely with family and childcare responsibilities. As the Web Program Manager for NASA's Space Operations and Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorates, Ms. Wolff is responsible for managing application development projects and operates as an advisor for Enterprise-level application governance and policy boards. She is a pragmatic innovator and works diligently to foster a culture of collaboration, diversity, and empowerment. Ms. Wolff implemented numerous successful initiatives at NASA including the Enterprise Platform approach for the Office of the Chief Information Officer, a data-driven business architecture for the Center of Excellence for Collaborative Innovation and NASA IT Labs which was awarded FedScoop's Federal IT Program of the Year and recognized as a finalist for the ACT-IAC Excellence.gov award for Enterprise Efficiency. Ms. Wolff was named a Computerworld Innovation Laureate, a NextGov Bold Award Finalist for Tech Innovation and was selected as a FedScoop 50 Most Inspiring Up & Comer in 2020. While NASA is her passion, her first love is her family. She approaches each day striving to make the world a better place for her three daughters and hopes to be an exemplary leader in promoting work-life balance with a personal emphasis on physical and emotional wellness. She will share insights on NASA's current and planned policies on virtual work and its impact on women.

Sarah J. Glynn, Senior Advisor, Women's Bureau, US Department of Labor, co-authored a report issued by the DOL on the impact of COVID19 on women's employment, visible here: [Bearing the Cost](#). We hope she will be able to report on current and future federal policies on virtual versus in person work and its impact on women.

We will include these in chat during meeting or possibly on Program page of Clearinghouse website as related resources on the topic:

- <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/why-has-covid-19-been-especially-harmful-for-working-women/>
- <https://www.oxfam.org/en/5-ways-women-and-girls-have-been-hardest-hit-covid-19>
- <https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/issue-brief/women-work-and-family-during-covid-19-findings-from-the-kff-womens-health-survey/>
- <https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/counter/pdf/10.1186/s12889-022-13422-3.pdf>
- https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w26947/w26947.pdf
- <https://leanin.org/women-in-the-workplace>

Summary Of January 24th, 2023, Clearinghouse on Women's Issues (CWI) Zoom meeting on "Identifying and Protecting U.S. Reproductive Rights After the Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* Decision" by Jan Erickson and her NOW intern, Genevieve Thompson.

This CWI noon virtual meeting provided an overview of important government actions regarding reproductive rights over the last seven months since the Supreme Court ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. Additionally, there was an update about actions in Virginia concerning efforts to curtail access to abortion by state leadership. The meeting was organized and emceed by CWI Co-President, Sue Klein. Connie Cordovilla, the other co-president, helped arrange the meeting where we had also hoped to have speakers from the federal Interagency Task Force on Reproductive Healthcare Access and the Department of Justice Reproductive Rights Task Force. A recording of the meeting is available and can be accessed on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/rVwBwZbJhk8>

Shaina Goodman on Federal Actions to Protect Reproductive Rights



Shaina Goodman, JD, Director for Reproductive Health and Rights, National Partnership for Women & Families. She received her juris doctor degree, master's in social work, a bachelor's degree in women & gender studies from Washington University in St. Louis and has a Maryland law license. She is also the mother of two toddlers.

Goodman provided an overview of the abortion access landscape, referring to a map of abortion access in the states at [Interactive Map: US Abortion Policies and Access After Roe | Guttmacher Institute](#), (Note: The information indicates that 24 states have varying degrees of restrictions, 12 of those have total or near total bans with legal challenges in five of them, plus six states where abortion is unavailable. The remaining states have total or near-total abortion bans blocked by the courts, but legal challenges are pending, while others face uncertain futures with elected officials determined to ban abortion. Only 16 states and the District of Columbia currently protect abortion access.) Goodman stressed that the situation has made it very difficult for patients to know where they can get care, in most cases it will be in a distant state. Many patients will have to confront the challenges and expense of traveling and a hotel stay, getting time off from their job and arranging for childcare. Most women who seek abortions have children.

In addition, we see that in situations where a miscarriage has occurred or a serious medical complication has arisen, getting appropriate medical attention has often been delayed by the need for medical providers to consult legal counsel before care can be provided. Often it is up to legal teams or hospitals' legal counsel to decide whether or when a woman can receive care, resulting in some cases sending women with miscarriages home to wait until they experience sepsis to get what will be life-saving care. Providers hands are tied in such cases; these restrictions on abortion do not allow physicians to provide the kind of medical care that they have pledged to do. Restrictions have also risked health complications for persons with autoimmune disease who are not pregnant but have difficulty accessing their prescribed medication – the same that is used to end a pregnancy or complete a miscarriage.

In addition, for those states which continue to provide abortion care, they are overburdened with numerous patients travelling from other states to obtain care. Clinics have difficulty providing care for patients from their own states – in addition to the influx of out-of-state patients. Goodman commented, “The situation is even worse than all of us imagined.”

With regard to federal initiatives adopted to assure access to abortion care, Goodman began the discussion looking at the higher-level initiatives. A very important one was the establishment of the **Biden-Harris Interagency Task Force on Reproductive Health Care Access**. The task force pulled cabinet level members to strategize for actions and initiatives that could be taken to protect and enhance access. In addition, Vice President Kamala Harris and other agency officials have held about a dozen roundtable discussions, providing platforms for advocates, physicians and leaders in the field. The Administration has also created a website to provide comprehensive and accurate information for the public, including listing resources in states which provide no access to abortion care. This can be found at, reproductiverights.gov.

In July, 2022 President Biden issued **Executive Order 14076 on “Securing Access to Reproductive and Other Healthcare Services.”** The Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA), under the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), requires hospitals to provide medical care to any persons showing up at a hospital in a medical emergency. The EO makes it clear that EMTALA pertains to reproductive health care services. Goodman added that the Department of Justice has recently won a lawsuit against the State of Idaho concerning a violation of the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act.

Additionally, the Affordable Care Act’s Section 1557 prohibits discrimination on basis of sex in health care and there is a **new proposed rule that would clarify the inclusion of reproductive healthcare within that definition**. If finalized, it would be one of the most impactful actions that the government has taken to shore up access to reproductive health care, Goodman emphasized. Enforcing any failure to provide abortion care as sex discrimination could be a landmark change. She added that this might also be litigated, and we need to watch out for that.

Under Medicaid, a state and federal partnership, the federal government has invited states to submit **Section 1115 waiver requests to change or expand access to care** for persons traveling from restrictive states to help them obtain care. There is also an effort by HHS for its **Office of Refugee Resettlement** to require that unaccompanied immigrant minors who are pregnant be located in states that offer abortion access protections.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has taken significant steps lately. The FDA is an Independent authority within HHS. Two really wonderful actions have been taken, Goodman said. The first is an action that makes it clear that **Plan B contraceptive is NOT an abortifacient**. In other words, Plan B is clearly a contraceptive, delaying or stopping the release of an egg from the ovary. Packaging for Plan B or generic versions have been changed to reflect scientific evidence on the exact action of the contraceptive. Advocates hope that, as a result of this action, anti-choice lawmakers will have more difficulty in prohibiting the use of this effective contraceptive.

The second wonderful action is that recently the **FDA has changed guidelines for Risk Evaluation and Management Strategies (REMS) pertaining to medication abortion.** The FDA lifted the in-person requirement for obtaining and filling prescriptions. Now your doctor can write a prescription and you can have your prescription filled by any method, including through telehealth. This change will take a while to get implemented, however. Under the REMS change, a program has been created in which **brick-and mortar-pharmacies and mail order entities can dispense medication abortion, in person or by mail.** CVS and Walgreens have announced that they intend to become certified to do this.

Other initiatives:

- The **Office of Personnel Management** clarified for federal employees and federal contractors that paid sick days can be used to travel for abortion care.
- The **Federal Trade Commission** is committed to enforcing the law against the illegal use of sensitive data. This may help ensure the safety of patient data regarding, ‘LPM’—last menstrual period and travel information from an employer or a state.
- The **Veterans Administration** announced that abortion care in some limited circumstances for veterans will be allowed.
- The **Department of Education** Issued guidance based on Title IX which clarified that this civil rights act’s prohibition against sex discrimination also covers pregnancy discrimination.
- The **Department of Defense** announced that travel and allowances for servicemembers and dependents would be provided to obtain abortion care when reproductive health care services are not available locally.
- The **Department of Justice** recently issued an opinion that **U.S. Postal Service** can deliver packages that contain medication abortion pills. The 1873 Comstock Act which barred the use of the U.S. Postal Service to send contraceptives, abortifacients, and other items is not a bar.

What’s next? Goodman noted that with state legislative sessions starting up, a lot of activity is expected in both red and blue states. She predicted that extremes will be moving further apart with fewer states in the middle. At the same time, there are initiatives in Congress. One of first actions by the House of Representatives was to pass a “Born Alive” act which doesn’t address a real problem – it is a messaging scare tactic from anti-abortion legislators. There is also the federal 15-week abortion ban that Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) has said he would promote. This is not likely to pass Congress and President Biden has promised to veto it. Other issues that could be addressed include pro-choice data privacy, strengthening HIPAA protections, getting rid of the Hyde Amendment, and the Administration continues to call on Congress to codify *Roe*. Recently, a South Carolina court ruled that the state abortion ban violated a state constitution provision guaranteeing privacy. We may also see litigation between the states. For instance, there is a disagreement between California and Texas over their respective state laws related to reproductive rights. This is brand new territory, Goodman said.

PS. Since the January meeting reproductive rights activists are facing another major threat to medical abortions. A judicial ruling may limit the use of FDA approved and very effective and safe mifepristone which is used in over 50% of all abortions and for other medical treatments. Let’s hope the Federal government will be able to stop this and other related threats.

MORE INFORMATION:

- <https://reproductiverights.gov/>
- [FACT SHEET: President Biden to Sign Executive Order Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Care Services](#)
- [FACT SHEET: President Biden Issues Executive Order at the First Meeting of the Task Force on Reproductive Healthcare Access](#)

[Click here to sign-up for the White House women's community newsletter](#)

Jamie Lockhart on the Status of Virginia State Legislation Pertaining to Reproductive Rights



Jamie Lockhart, (she/her) serves as the Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia, a statewide advocacy organization whose mission is to preserve and broaden access to reproductive health care through legislation, public education, electoral activity and litigation in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Previously, Jamie served as the National Director of Mission: Readiness and was recruited for campaigns in the Commonwealth of Virginia, including President Obama's 2012 re-election, and served as a Legislative Assistant and Director of E-Communications for Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO). Jamie graduated *magna cum laude* from James Madison University and obtained a master's in public administration degree from the Harvard Kennedy School. She is a certified group fitness instructor, triathlete and mom to a toddler.

Lockhart summarized the landscape of state legislation impacting reproductive rights. As of January, eighteen states have banned access to abortion. Bans have eliminated abortion in 13 states: AL, AR, ID, KY, LA, MO, MS, OK, SD, TN, TX, WI, WV. Bans have eliminated abortions after the earliest stages of pregnancy in 1 state: GA. Bans on abortion between 15-20 weeks are in effect in 4 states: AZ, FL, NC, UT. Other states have abortion bans not currently in effect as they're being challenged in state courts. Lockhart reviewed the barrage of trigger laws and political maneuvers by abortion opponents which resulted in the unraveling of access after the overturn of *Roe v. Wade*.

Lockhart described the political situation in Virginia which is in contrast to the previous state administration and legislature that were headed by supporters of reproductive rights. In 2020 and 2021 the legislature passed the Reproductive Health Protection Act in 2020, removing several restrictions on abortion. During those two years, they also expanded birth control access, repealed health insurance restrictions, and protected health care access for the transgender community. It is critical to remain vigilant throughout this session, Lockhart warned. Currently, the VA House of Delegates and top executive offices are controlled by opponents of reproductive rights; support of reproductive rights may hang by a single vote in the state Senate. Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) has the power to sign, amend and veto bills, while Lt. Gov. Winsome Sears (R) is opposed to abortion rights and even stated her support for an anti-abortion ban similar to the extreme Texas six-week ban during her campaign. The Virginia

Senate has 40 senators, consisting of 22 Democrats and 18 Republicans. Unfortunately, the vote to defeat harmful abortion legislation could be as close as one vote. So far in the Virginia session of 2023, a bill to reinstate biased counseling before an abortion and a so-called 'Born Alive' bill have been passed in the House of Delegates.

Lockhart said that Planned Parenthood has announced their 2023 priorities in Virginia to support the **constitutional amendment to protect reproductive freedom** HJ519 + SJ255 as well as the **Contraceptive Equity Act** HB2089+SB1112. She urged that activists continue to oppose any bills that put politicians between patients and their private medical decisions, such as Gov. Youngkin's 15-Week Abortion Ban, HB 2278+ SB 1385, the so-called "born alive" bill and finally, oppose all anti-Transgender legislation.

Preview YouTube video CWI Jan2023-"Identify & Protect U.S. Reproductive Rights After Supreme Court's Dobbs v. Jackson WHO"



Reproductive Rights Articles by Sue Klein's Favorite Feminist Journalist, Dr. Carrie N. Baker

[Grassroots Progress to Hold Anti-Abortion Crisis Pregnancy Centers Accountable](#), Ms., February 7, 2023.
[U.S. Senators Urge FDA Update to Mifepristone Label for Miscarriage Use: 'Patients Should Have Access to the Most Effective Medication Available'](#), Ms., February 3, 2023.

[Anti-Abortion Groups Try to Intimidate Pharmacies Planning to Dispense Abortion Pills](#), Ms., January 31, 2023.

[New York State Assembly Considers Groundbreaking Equal Rights Amendment](#), Ms., January 19, 2023.

[New York Shield Law Would Protect Clinicians Mailing Abortion Pills to Patients in Red States](#), Ms., January 19, 2023.

[Plan B Does Not Cause Abortion, Says FDA](#), Ms., January 12, 2023.

[The Postal Service Can Deliver Abortion Pills by Mail—Even in States Banning Abortion](#), Ms., January 9, 2023.

[FDA Allows Pharmacies to Sell Abortion Pills—But Requires Unnecessary and Burdensome Certification Process](#), Ms., January 6, 2023.

Here's a scholarly piece:

[“History and Politics of the Abortion Pill in the United States and the Rise of Telemedicine Abortion During the COVID-19,”](#) *Journal of Health Politics, Law and Policy* (2023).

And a webinar!

[Everything You Need to Know About Abortion Pills](#), Ms., January 23, 2023.

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Events of Interest to Feminists (Times are Eastern) Most events are virtual.

Thanks to Montgomery Co. NOW for sharing information on many of the events.

Tue, Feb. 21, 12 PM. Girls in STEM: A (Data-based) Tale of Confidence & Satisfaction. Webinar National Girls Collaborative. Register:

Tue, Feb 21, 4-5 PM. Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence 35th Annual Memorial Service For More Info and to Register <https://www.mnadv.org/2023-memorial-service/eeVirtual> Workshop for E

Wed. Feb. 22, noon to 12:45 PM. Virtual Brave Girls Virtual Storytime: Dancing Hands. National Women’s History Museum. **Event Registration**

Wed. Feb 22, 7-8PM Welcome to Generation Ratify [TO FIND OUT MORE AND TO SIGN UP](#)

Thur. Feb. 23, 6-7 PM. Virtual Workshop for Educators, Session 1: Media Literacy & Media as Political Objects. National Women’s History Museum. **Event Registration**

Mon. Feb 27 7-8:30 PM. How Dis/ Misinformation Targets Non-English Speakers, Especially in Election Season. League of Women Voters of Montgomery County. [TO FIND OUT MORE AND TO SIGN UP](#)

Tue. Feb 28. Noon, Zoom. Clearinghouse on Women’s Issues (See Page 1&2 of newsletter for details.)

Tue. Feb 28, 6:30-7 PM. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and You. Maryland Women’s Heritage Center [FOR MORE INFO AND TO REGISTER](#)

Thur. March 2, 6-7 PM. Virtual Workshop for Educators, Session 2: Media Literacy and Women's Magazines. National Women's History Museum. Event Registration
<https://events.womenshistory.org/events/educator-workshop-session1-media-literacy-499/>

Fri. March 3, 6:30-9:30 PM Artists for ERA Reception, AAUW of Maryland. Exhibit Dates Feb 27-Mar. 5, Baltimore County Arts Guild Clubhouse, 10 St. timothy Lane, Catonsville, MD [FOR MORE INFO AND TO REGISTER](#)

Sun. March 5, 3-4PM. At the Threshold of Liberty: Black Women in 19th Century DC with Professor Tamika Y. Nunley. National Women's History Museum. Event Registration
<https://events.womenshistory.org/events/sundayshome-at-the-threshold-of-liberty-242/>

Wed. March 8. International Women's Day. Check for Many Women's Events

Tue. March 21, noon-1:30 PM Updates on DC Women's History Museums and sites to visit in DC area. Clearinghouse on Women's Issues. Visit <https://womensclearinghouse.org>.

June 30-July 2, 2023 National NOW Conference, Arlington, VA

CWI's newsletter is endowed in loving memory of our previous longtime editor, Roslyn Kaiser

Newsletter edited by Sue Klein

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Clearinghouse on Women’s Issues Membership Form

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The CWI membership year is: **July 1-June 30**. Multi-year and Gift memberships are encouraged and discounted! Please fill in beginning and end years (e.g. 2023-2026 for a 3-yr membership). Members will receive CWI newsletters and meeting announcements as well as other feminist news and event notifications. Membership dues and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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Three-year	\$65	\$100		

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