

2023 Kansas Statutes

65-6710. Same; materials to be published and distributed by the department of health and environment; materials to be available at no cost. (a) The department shall cause to be published and distributed widely, within 30 days after the effective date of this act, and shall update on an annual basis, the following easily comprehensible informational materials:

(1) Geographically indexed printed materials designed to inform the woman of public and private agencies and services available to assist a woman through pregnancy, upon childbirth and while her child is dependent, including, but not limited to, a list of providers of free ultrasound services and adoption agencies. The materials shall include a comprehensive list of the agencies, a description of the services they offer and the telephone numbers and addresses of the agencies; and inform the woman about available medical assistance benefits for prenatal care, childbirth and neonatal care and about the support obligations of the father of a child who is born alive. The department shall ensure that the materials described in this section are comprehensive and do not directly or indirectly promote, exclude or discourage the use of any agency or service described in this section. The materials shall also contain a toll-free 24-hour-a-day telephone number which may be called to obtain, orally, such a list and description of agencies in the locality of the caller and of the services they offer. The materials shall state that it is unlawful for any individual to coerce a woman to undergo an abortion, and that any physician who performs an abortion upon a woman without her informed consent may be liable to her for damages. Kansas law permits adoptive parents to pay costs of prenatal care, childbirth and neonatal care. The materials shall include the following statement: "Many public and private agencies exist to provide counseling and information on available services. You are strongly urged to seek their assistance to obtain guidance during your pregnancy. In addition, you are encouraged to seek information on alternatives to abortion, including adoption, and resources available to postpartum mothers. The law requires that your physician or the physician's agent provide the enclosed information."

(2) Printed materials that inform the pregnant woman of the probable anatomical and physiological characteristics of the unborn child at two-week gestational increments from fertilization to full term, including pictures or drawings representing the development of an unborn child at two-week gestational increments, and any relevant information on the possibility of the unborn child's survival. Any such pictures or drawings shall contain the dimensions of the unborn child and shall be realistic. The material shall include the following statements: (A) That by no later than 20 weeks from fertilization, the unborn child has the physical structures necessary to experience pain; (B) that there is evidence that by 20 weeks from fertilization unborn children seek to evade certain stimuli in a manner that in an infant or an adult would be interpreted to be a response to pain; (C) that anesthesia is routinely administered to unborn children who are 20 weeks from fertilization or older who undergo prenatal surgery; (D) that less than 5% of all natural pregnancies end in spontaneous miscarriage after detection of cardiac activity, and a fetal heartbeat is, therefore, a key medical indicator that an unborn child is likely to achieve the capacity for live birth; and (E) that abortion terminates the life of a whole, separate, unique, living human being. The materials shall be objective, nonjudgmental and designed to convey only accurate scientific information about the unborn child at the various gestational ages. The material shall also contain objective information describing the methods of abortion procedures commonly employed, the medical risks commonly associated with each such procedure, including risk of premature birth in future pregnancies, risk of breast cancer, risks to the woman's reproductive health and the medical risks associated with carrying an unborn child to term.

(3) The printed materials shall, at a minimum, contain the following text: Your doctor is required to tell you about the nature of the physical and emotional risks of both the abortion procedure and carrying a child to term. The doctor must tell you how long you have been pregnant and must give you a chance to ask questions and discuss your decision about the pregnancy carefully and privately in your own

language.

In order to determine the gestational age of the unborn child, the doctor may use ultrasound equipment preparatory to the performance of an abortion. You have the right to view the ultrasound image of the unborn child at no additional expense, and you have the right to receive a picture of the unborn child.

A directory of services is also available. By calling or visiting the agencies and offices in the directory you can find out about alternatives to abortion, assistance to make an adoption plan for your baby or locate public and private agencies that offer medical and financial help during pregnancy, during childbirth and while you are raising your child.

Furthermore, you should know that: (A) It is unlawful for any individual to coerce you to undergo an abortion. Coercion is the use of express or implied threats of violence or intimidation to compel a person to act against such person's will; (B) abortion terminates the life of a whole, separate, unique, living human being; (C) any physician who fails to provide informed consent prior to performing an abortion may be guilty of unprofessional conduct and liable for damages; (D) you are not required to pay any amount for the abortion procedure until the 24-hour waiting period has expired; (E) the father of your child is legally responsible to assist in the support of the child, even in instances where the father has offered to pay for an abortion; and (F) the law permits adoptive parents to pay the costs of prenatal care, childbirth and neonatal care.

Many public and private agencies exist to provide counseling and information on available services. You are strongly urged to seek assistance from such agencies in order to obtain guidance during your pregnancy. In addition, you are encouraged to seek information on alternatives to abortion, including adoption, and resources available to postpartum mothers. The law requires that your physician, or the physician's agent, provide this information.

Pregnancy begins at fertilization with the union of a man's sperm and a woman's egg to form a single-cell embryo. This brand new being contains the original copy of a new individual's complete genetic code. Gender, eye color and other traits are determined at fertilization.

Most significant developmental milestones occur long before birth during the first eight weeks following fertilization when most body parts and all body systems appear and begin to function. The main divisions of the body, such as the head, chest, abdomen, pelvis, arms and legs are established by about four weeks after fertilization. Eight weeks after fertilization, except for the small size, the developing human's overall appearance and many internal structures closely resemble the newborn.

Pregnancy is not just a time for growing all the parts of the body. It is also a time of preparation for survival after birth. Starting more than 30 weeks before birth, many common daily activities seen in children and adults begin in the womb. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiccups, touching the face, breathing motions, urination, right- or left-handedness, thumb-sucking, swallowing, yawning, jaw movement, reflexes, REM sleep, hearing, taste and sensation.

Unless otherwise noted, all prenatal ages in the rest of these materials are referenced from the start of the last normal menstrual period. This age is two weeks greater than the age since fertilization.

By five weeks, development of the brain, the spinal cord and the heart is well underway. The heart begins beating at five weeks and one day, and is visible by ultrasound almost immediately. By six weeks, the heart is pumping the unborn child's own blood to such unborn child's brain and body. All four chambers of the heart are present, and more than one million heartbeats have occurred. The head, chest and abdominal cavities have formed and the beginnings of the arms and legs are easily seen. At 6½ weeks, rapid brain development continues with the appearance of the cerebral hemispheres. At 7½ weeks, the unborn child reflexively turns away in response to light touch on the face. The fingers also begin to form on the hand. By 8½ weeks, the bones of the jaw and collarbone begin to harden. Brainwaves have been measured and recorded by this point in gestation. By nine weeks, the hands move, the neck turns and hiccups begin. Girls also now have ovaries and boys have testes. The unborn child's heart is nearly fully formed, and the heart rate peaks at about 170 beats per minute and will gradually slow down until birth. Electrical

recordings of the heart at 9½ weeks are very similar to the EKG tracing of the unborn child.

By 10 weeks, intermittent breathing motions begin, and the kidneys begin to produce and release urine. All the fingers and toes are free and fully formed, and several hundred muscles are now present. The hands and feet move frequently, and most unborn children show the first signs of right- or left-handedness. Pain receptors in the skin, the sensory nerves connecting them to the spinal cord, and the nerve tracts in the spinal cord that will carry pain impulses to the brain are all present by this time. Experts estimate the 10-week unborn child possesses approximately 90% of the 4,500 body parts found in adults. This means approximately 4,000 permanent body parts are present just eight weeks after fertilization.

By 11 weeks, the head moves forward and back, the jaw actively opens and closes and the unborn child periodically sighs and stretches. The face, palms of the hands and soles of the feet are sensitive to light touch. The unborn child begins thumb-sucking and swallowing amniotic fluid. The uterus is now present, and girls' ovaries now contain reproductive cells that will give rise to eggs later in life.

At 12 weeks, fingerprints start forming, while fingernails and toenails begin to grow. The bones are hardening in many locations. The heartbeat can be detected with a hand-held doppler fetal monitor, or external heart rate monitor. By 13 weeks the lips and nose are fully formed and the unborn child can make complex facial expressions. At 14 weeks, taste buds are present all over the mouth and tongue. The unborn child now produces a wide variety of hormones. Also, the arms reach final proportion to body size. By 15 weeks, the entire unborn child, except for parts of the scalp, responds to light touch, and tooth development is underway.

At 16 weeks, a pregnant woman may begin to feel the unborn child move. The unborn child also begins making several digestive enzymes. Around 17 weeks, blood cell formation moves to its permanent location inside the bone marrow, and the unborn child begins storing energy in the form of body fat.

By 18 weeks, the formation of the breathing passages, called the bronchial tree, is complete. The unborn child will release stress hormones in response to being poked with a needle. By 19 weeks, the unborn child's heart has beaten more than 20 million times.

By 20 weeks, nearly all organs and structures of the unborn child have been formed. The larynx, or voice box, moves in a way similar to movement seen during crying after birth. The skin has developed sweat glands and is covered by a greasy white substance called vernix, which protects the skin from the long exposure to amniotic fluid. At 21 weeks, breathing patterns, body movements and the heart rate begin to follow daily cycles called circadian rhythms.

By 22 weeks, the cochlea, the organ of hearing, reaches adult size, and the unborn child begins hearing and responding to various sounds. All the skin layers and structures are now complete. The unborn child reacts to stimuli that would be recognized as painful if applied to an adult human. By 22 weeks, some infants can live outside the womb with specialized medical care, and survival rates have been reported as high as 40% in some medical centers. Between 20 and 23 weeks, rapid eye movements begin, which are similar to the REM sleep pattern seen when children and adults have dreams.

By 24 weeks, more than 30 million heartbeats have occurred. Survival rates for infants born at 24 weeks have been reported as high as 81%. By 25 weeks, breathing motions may occur up to 44 times per minute.

By 26 weeks, sudden, loud noises trigger a blink-startle response in the unborn child and may increase body movement, the heart rate and swallowing. The lungs begin to produce a substance necessary for breathing after birth. The survival rate of infants born at 26 weeks has been reported as high as 95%.

By 28 weeks, the sense of smell is functioning and the eyes produce tears. Nearly all infants born between this point and full term survive. By 29 weeks, pupils of the eyes react to light. By 31 weeks, the heart has beat more than 40 million times, and wrinkles in the skin disappear as more fat deposits are formed.

By 32 weeks, breathing movements occur up to 40% of the time. By 34 weeks true alveoli, or air "pocket" cells, begin developing in the lungs. At 36 weeks, scalp hair is silky and lies against the head. By 37 weeks, the unborn child has a firm hand grip,

and the heart has beat more than 50 million times. The unborn child initiates labor, ideally around 40 weeks, leading to childbirth.

By state law, no person shall perform or induce an abortion when the unborn child is viable or pain-capable unless such person is a physician and has a documented referral. The physician who performs or induces an abortion when the unborn child is viable must have a documented referral from another physician not legally or financially affiliated with the physician performing or inducing the abortion. Both physicians must determine that the abortion is necessary to preserve the life of the pregnant woman or that a continuation of the pregnancy will cause a substantial and irreversible impairment of a major physical bodily function of the pregnant woman. If the child is born alive, the attending physician has the legal obligation to take all reasonable steps necessary to maintain the life and health of the child.

What about adoption? Women or couples facing an untimely pregnancy who choose not to take on the full responsibilities of parenthood have another option, which is adoption. Counseling and support services are a key part of adoption and are available from a variety of adoption agencies and parent support groups across the state. A list of adoption agencies is available. There are several ways to make a plan for adoption, including through a child placement agency or through a private attorney. Although fully anonymous adoptions are available, some degree of openness in adoption is more common, such as permitting the birth mother to choose the adoptive parents. A father only has the right to consent to an adoption or refuse consent and raise the child if he provides support for the mother during the last six months of the pregnancy.

The father of a child has a legal responsibility to provide for the support, educational, medical and other needs of the child. In Kansas, that responsibility includes child support payments to the child's mother or legal guardian. A child has rights of inheritance from the father and may be eligible through him for benefits such as life insurance, social security, pension, veteran's or disability benefits. Further, the child benefits from knowing the father's medical history and any potential health problems that can be passed genetically. A father's and mother's rights are equal regarding access, care and custody.

Paternity can be established in Kansas by two methods: (A) The father and mother, at the time of birth, can sign forms provided by the hospital acknowledging paternity and the father's name is added to the birth certificate; or (B) a legal action can be brought in a court of law to determine paternity and establish a child support order. Issues of paternity affect your legal rights and the rights of the child.

The decision regarding your pregnancy is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. There are lists of state, county and local health and social service agencies and organizations available to assist you. You are encouraged to contact these groups if you need more information so you can make an informed decision.

(4) A certification form to be used by physicians or their agents under subsection (e) of K.S.A. 65-6709, and amendments thereto, which will list all the items of information which are to be given to women by physicians or their agents under the woman's-right-to-know act.

(5) A standardized video containing all of the information described in paragraphs (1) and (2). In addition, the video shall show ultrasound images, using the best available ultrasound technology, of an unborn child at two week gestational increments.

(b) The print materials required under this section shall be printed in a typeface large enough to be clearly legible. The informational video may be published in digital video disc format or in the latest video technology available. All materials required to be published under this section shall also be published online on the department's website. All materials shall be made available in both English and Spanish language versions.

(c) The materials required under this section shall be available at no cost from the department upon request and in appropriate number to any person, facility or hospital.

History: L. 1997, ch. 190, § 28; L. 2009, ch. 28, § 2; L. 2011, ch. 44, § 7; L. 2013, ch. 119, § 15; July 1.