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MORE THAN 217,000 WOMEN IN OKLAHOMA LIVE IN CONTRACEPTIVE DESERTS

(Washington, D.C.)—According to data released by [Power to Decide](#), an estimated [217,460 women](#) living at or below 250% of the poverty level in Oklahoma live in contraceptive deserts, counties in which there is not reasonable access to a health center offering the full range of contraceptive methods. Currently, across the country more than 19 million U.S. women of low income live in [contraceptive deserts](#).

“In Oklahoma, more than [217,000 women](#) must overcome significant barriers to access the contraception they need and deserve in order to decide if, when and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child,” said Raegan McDonald-Mosley, MD, MPH, CEO of Power to Decide. “The challenge of covering costs associated with obtaining family planning services—such as transportation, child care and unpaid time off from work—may be too great a burden for those already struggling to make ends meet.”

Oklahoman women are also far less likely to have health coverage than women in other parts of the country, which limits their ability to get the birth control method that is right for them. In Oklahoma, 21.5% of women of reproductive age (13-44) are uninsured, almost double the national average of 12.1%.

Despite these challenges, family planning providers are making every effort to provide contraceptive services to patients across the state. States like Oklahoma can also take proactive steps to expand access to contraception.

Oklahoma recently expanded Medicaid to low-income adults, which will help decrease the percentage of uninsured women, and by extension, give them contraceptive coverage. In addition, allowing pharmacists to prescribe contraception and requiring insurance to cover an extended supply of prescription contraceptives can make it easier to access some contraceptive methods. Oklahoma can also guard against additional barriers to access by enacting policies that protect insurance coverage of the full range of contraceptive methods.

More information about these policies can be found [here](#). In addition, information about Oklahoma’s telehealth policies relevant to contraceptive access can be found [here](#).

Power to Decide is a private, non-partisan, non-profit organization that works to ensure all people—no matter who they are, where they live or what their economic status might be—have the power to decide if, when and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child. Please visit us at www.PowerToDecide.org or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).