



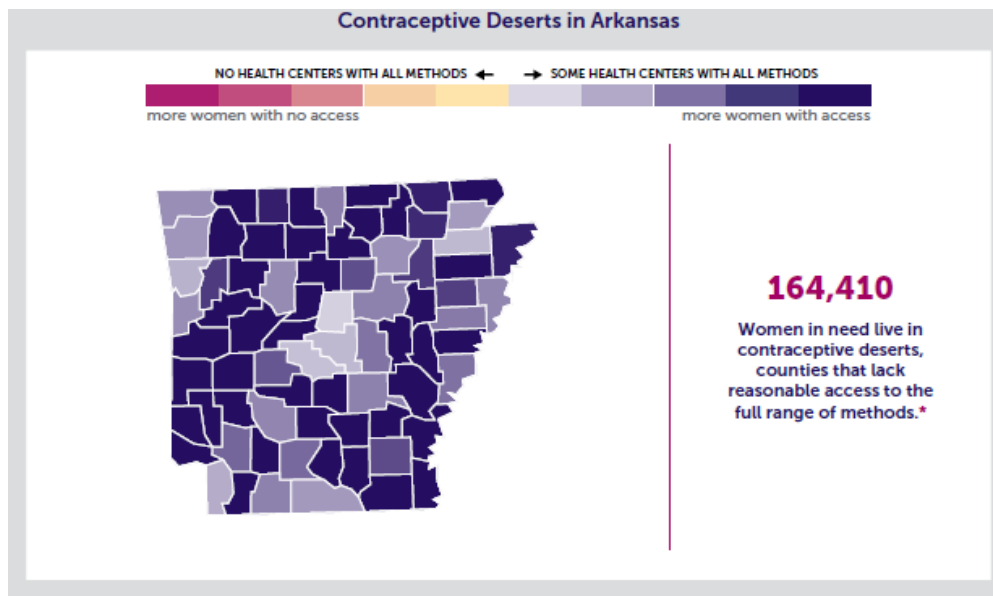
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MORE THAN 164,000 WOMEN IN ARKANSAS LIVE IN CONTRACEPTIVE DESERTS

(Washington, D.C.) — According to data released by [Power to Decide](#), an estimated [164,410 women](#) living at or below 250% of the poverty level in Arkansas 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](#).

Family planning providers are making every effort to provide contraceptive services to patients across the state despite these challenges, and Arkansas legislators have taken steps to increase access to contraception. For example, expanding Medicaid to cover adults without children, as allowed under the ACA, helps decrease the percentage of uninsured women, and by extension, gives them contraceptive coverage. In addition, Arkansas passed a law that will soon permit pharmacists to prescribe contraception.



Still, Arkansas can take additional proactive steps to expand access to contraception. This is more important than ever, as the pandemic continues to devastate people’s lives in various ways. By requiring insurance to cover an extended supply of prescription contraceptives at one time, Arkansas can make it easier to access some contraceptive methods. Arkansas can also guard against additional barriers to access by enacting policies that protect insurance coverage for the full range of contraceptive methods.

“Despite the proactive efforts being made in Arkansas, more than 164,000 women must still overcome significant barriers to access the contraception they need and deserve,” said Power to Decide CEO Raegan McDonald-Mosley, MD, MPH. “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.”

Visit our [website](#) for more information about contraceptive access in Arkansas, as well as an overview of [state telehealth policies](#) and their impact on contraceptive access.

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[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 or have a child.