

Arnold Ventures Contraceptive Choice and Access

All people should be able to access, afford, and have the freedom to choose the birth control method best for them.

Contraception is a vital tool for health, economic opportunity, freedom, and justice, which is why broad, bipartisan majorities of Americans support access to contraception. However, with the nation's patchwork system of state and federal laws, millions of people still struggle to access the contraception they need to decide whether, when and how to have a family.

Our approach to closing the gaps in contraceptive access and choice focuses on addressing the challenges of affordability and practical access via policy reform and implementation. Today:

- 21 million people¹ need public support to access and afford contraceptive care.
- Federal funding for high-quality family planning for low-income people has been stagnant for nearly a decade.²
- Even small co-pays create barriers to contraception and limit people's ability to make choices for their futures and families.
- 19 million low-income women live in contraceptive deserts, where there are one or fewer health centers in their county offering a full range of contraceptive methods.³
- Limiting access to birth control to a physician's office creates an additional set of barriers – time, transportation, child care, insurance, and more.
- Contraceptive affordability depends on expanding coverage for family planning services, ensuring coverage standards allow people to access the method they need, and making sure those who slip through the coverage cracks still have options for affordable care.
- Practical challenges can be alleviated with new distribution channels such as over-the-counter oral hormonal contraception, pharmacist-prescribed birth control, and telemedicine.



FUNDING STRATEGY

To help drive evidence-based policy change, we are engaged in grantmaking to a wide range of partners who conduct the following kinds of work:

- 1. Policy research & development** to evaluate existing policies' impact, identify barriers, and develop new solutions to close access gaps
- 2. Advocacy and technical support** for policymakers to ensure policy solutions make a difference in people's lives

¹ Frost JJ et al., *Publicly Supported Family Planning Services in the United States: Likely Need, Availability and Impact, 2016*, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2019.

² <https://opa.hhs.gov/grant-programs/archive/title-x-program-archive/title-x-program-funding-history>

³ <https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/resource-library/access-birth-control-and-contraceptive-deserts>

