

# Abortion Reporting: North Carolina (2023)

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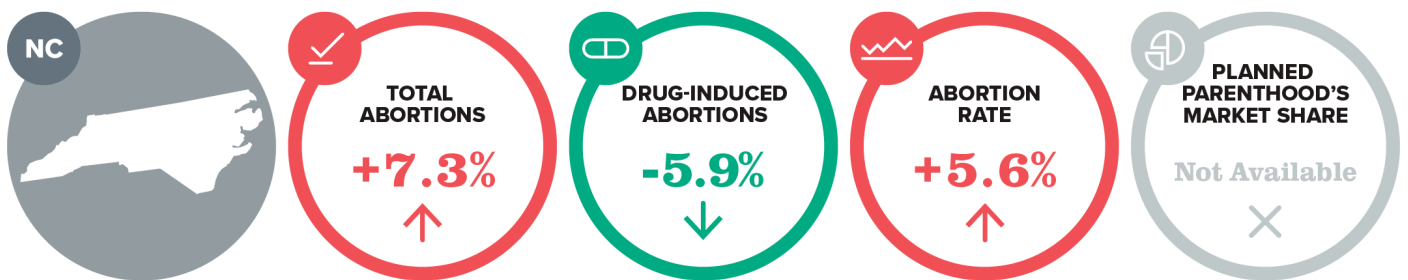
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North Carolina’s [2023 abortion statistics](#) were published online by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services in June 2025. The report shows that North Carolina abortions increased in 2023. The data published by the state does not include the total number of abortions obtained by North Carolina residents out of state or the number of self-managed abortions performed by women outside of the healthcare system. It is also unlikely that the report contains the total number of mail-order abortion drugs obtained by North Carolina residents prescribed by licensed abortion providers in other states. In a separate section, Charlotte Lozier Institute (CLI) will describe data provided by the Guttmacher Institute’s Monthly Abortion Provision Study that details the total number of abortions occurring in the state in 2023 as estimated by Guttmacher’s sample survey and mathematical models. Guttmacher’s abortion estimates include the number of abortions obtained at brick-and-mortar facilities and those provided via telehealth and virtual providers in the United States.

North Carolina’s statute code [defines](#) a surgical abortion as “[t]he use or prescription of any instrument or device intentionally to terminate the pregnancy of a woman known to be pregnant...” (§90-21.81(9b)), and a medical abortion as “[t]he use of any medicine, drug, or other substance intentionally to terminate the pregnancy of a woman known to be pregnant...” (§90-21.81(4e)). The state does not consider a procedure that attempt to preserve the life or health of an unborn child or the removal of dead unborn children as a result of miscarriages or ectopic pregnancies to be an abortion.

In North Carolina, abortion is prohibited after the 12<sup>th</sup> week of gestation except in cases where a continued pregnancy would threaten the life or physical health of the mother. North Carolina’s law also contains a rape and incest exception until 21 weeks of gestation and fetal anomaly exception until 25 weeks of gestation (§90-21.81B). This law went into effect on July 1, 2023. Before it went into effect, North Carolina limited abortion through 19 weeks of gestation.

## Statistics and Changes in North Carolina Abortions, 2022-2023



*The change in total abortions and the abortion rate reflects abortions reported in North Carolina, including nonresidents. The change in drug-induced abortions reflects abortions performed on North Carolina residents. The report does not include information on Planned Parenthood’s North Carolina abortion market share.*

## Abortion Totals and Trends

In 2023, there were 42,954 abortions reported in North Carolina, an increase of 7% from [2022](#). There were 27,146 abortions among North Carolina residents, down 6% from the previous year. The increase in abortions occurring in North Carolina was due to the 38% increase in the number of nonresident women who obtained abortions in North Carolina. Abortions on resident women composed 62%, as opposed to 72% in 2022, of all abortions reported in the state in 2023. Drug-induced abortions performed on state residents decreased by 6% from 2022 and represented 69% of resident abortions (Fig. 1). CLI estimates that North Carolina’s abortion rate increased by 6% to 20 abortions per 1,000 women of

childbearing age (Fig. 2).<sup>1</sup> As of June 2025, 32 states had released 2023 abortion statistics, with 18 reporting that abortions increased from 2022.

**State Report Summary**

The North Carolina report includes information on abortions performed on state residents both in North Carolina and in other states; most of the information in the report does not include abortions performed on nonresident women. In 2023, 1% of the resident abortions reported to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services were performed out-of-state, and 99% were performed in North Carolina.<sup>2</sup>

Eight percent of North Carolina resident abortions were obtained by girls under the age of 20. Twenty-seven percent were obtained by women in their early twenties, and 28% by women in their later twenties. Twenty-one percent were performed on women ages 30 to 34, and 13% were performed on women ages 35 and older. Age was not reported for 2% of the abortions.

Non-Hispanic black women composed the largest group of North Carolina residents undergoing abortions, making up 48% of the total even though non-Hispanic black women make up only 23% of North Carolina’s overall population of women of childbearing age. Twenty-six percent of the abortions were performed on non-Hispanic white women. The 2023 black abortion rate in North Carolina was 26, over four times higher than the white abortion rate of 5.9. One percent of the abortions were performed on American Indian women. Three percent of North Carolina resident abortions were obtained by women of other non-Hispanic races, and 4% by women of multiple non-Hispanic races. Seventeen percent of the abortions were performed on Hispanic women. Race was not reported for 2% of the abortions.

Unlike in previous years, data on abortions by marital status and education level were not reported.

Thirty-seven percent of abortions performed on North Carolina residents were on women with no living children. Twenty-five percent were performed on women with one child, and 36% were obtained by women with two or more children. Over half (55%) of the abortions were performed on women with no previous abortions, compared to 21% with one prior abortion and 16% with two or more prior abortions. The number of living children was not reported for 3% of the women getting abortions, and the number of previous abortions was not reported for 8%.

The majority of North Carolina resident abortions (67%) occurred at eight weeks of gestation or earlier. Twenty-six percent were performed between nine and 12 weeks of gestation, while 3% were reported between 13 and 15 weeks. Two percent of the abortions occurred between 16 and 20 weeks, with 577 performed in North Carolina and 13 abortions performed in other states. There were 77 abortions at 21 weeks of gestation or later, with 49 being performed on residents in North Carolina and 28 being performed on residents in other states. Gestational age was not reported for 2.2%. To see the change in abortions by gestational age from 2022 to 2023, see the table below:

Weeks of Gestation	# of Resident Abortions, 2023	% of Total Resident Abortions, 2023	# of Resident Abortions, 2022	% of Total Resident Abortions, 2022
≤ 8	18,085	67%	20,398	71%
9-12	7,052	26%	6,086	21%
13-15	755	3%	1,272	4%
16-20 (in state)	577	2%	833	3%
16-20 (residents went out of state)	13	0.1%	26	0.1%
21+ (in state)	49	0.2%	0	0%
21+ (residents went out of state)	28	0.1%	39	0.1%
Unknown	587	2%	201	0.7%
Total	27,146	NA (doesn’t add up to 100% because of rounding)	28,855	NA (doesn’t add up to 100% because of rounding)

Twenty-nine percent of North Carolina resident abortions were performed via suction curettage. Sixty-nine percent were drug-induced abortions, while three abortions were hysterectomy/hysterotomy abortions. Two percent of abortions were performed via unknown methods.

**Abortions Performed by County of Occurrence**

Abortions were performed in 14 of North Carolina’s 100 counties. Following is a breakdown of the number of abortions occurring in North Carolina in 2023, as well as the number of brick-and-mortar abortion providers located within the county.<sup>3</sup>

	<b># of Abortions (2023)</b>	<b># of Brick-and-Mortar Abortion Providers in County as of 2023<sup>4</sup></b>
Buncombe County	2,683	1
Cabarrus	21	0
Catawba	2	0
Cleveland	1	0
Cumberland	3,710	2
Durham	1,041	3
Forsyth	1,824	2
Guilford	3,012	2
Haywood	2	0
Mecklenburg	19,251	3
New Hanover	1,377	1
Orange	3,269	2
Rowan	4	0
Wake	6,757	2
Total	42,954	18

**Abortion Provider Breakdown in North Carolina<sup>4</sup>**

# of brick-and-mortar locations	18
# of independent centers	8
# of Planned Parenthood centers	8
# of hospitals/doctors’ offices that perform abortions	2
# of abortion drug providers	18
# of abortion drug-only providers	3
# of surgical and abortion drug providers	15
# of online mail-order abortion drug companies licensed in the state	6
# of brick-and-mortar locations that also mail abortion drugs	0
Latest gestational age that a center performs surgical abortion	Through 12 weeks

**2023 Guttmacher Data<sup>5</sup>**

Guttmacher [estimated](#) that 45,710 abortions occurred in North Carolina, a total 6% higher than the one reported by the state. The total number of abortions occurring in North Carolina was not the only figure where the state’s reported figure

was significantly different. While the state reported that 26,767 North Carolina residents obtained abortions in the state in 2023, Guttmacher reported that 30,040 North Carolina residents obtained abortions in their home state.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, while the state reported that 16,187 nonresidents obtained abortions in North Carolina but didn't report their states of residence, Guttmacher reported 15,040 nonresidents obtaining abortions in North Carolina in 2023. To see the number of abortions obtained in North Carolina by women from various states according to Guttmacher's estimates, see the following table:

<b>States of Residence for Women Who Traveled to North Carolina</b>	<b># of Abortions Obtained by Non-Resident Women in North Carolina, 2023</b>
Georgia	6,060
South Carolina	5,740
Tennessee	1,270
Alabama	960
Virginia	350
Florida	210
Texas	180
Mississippi	150
New York	120
Total	15,040

Lastly, while the state reported that 379 North Carolina traveled out of state to obtain an abortion in 2023, Guttmacher reported that 2,240 women traveled out of state. To see the number of abortions obtained by North Carolina women in various states according to Guttmacher, see below:

<b>States Traveled to by North Carolina Women</b>	<b># of Abortions Obtained by North Carolina Women Who Traveled to Other states to Get Abortions, 2023</b>
Virginia	1,260
Maryland	310
D.C.	290
South Carolina	240
Georgia	140
Total	2,240

### **State Ranking**

In 2024, CLI published a [paper](#) reevaluating abortion reporting across the country, with North Carolina ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> best. To improve its reporting, North Carolina could report the number of abortions by marital status and level of education again and release the complications data the state is mandated to collect under [SB20](#) passed into law in 2023. North Carolina could also improve its reporting by including information for all abortions occurring in the state, not just those performed on state residents. Lastly, North Carolina could also identify the states that do or do not share data on North Carolina residents who travel out of state for abortions.

Figure 1. North Carolina resident abortions<sup>7</sup> 2005-2023

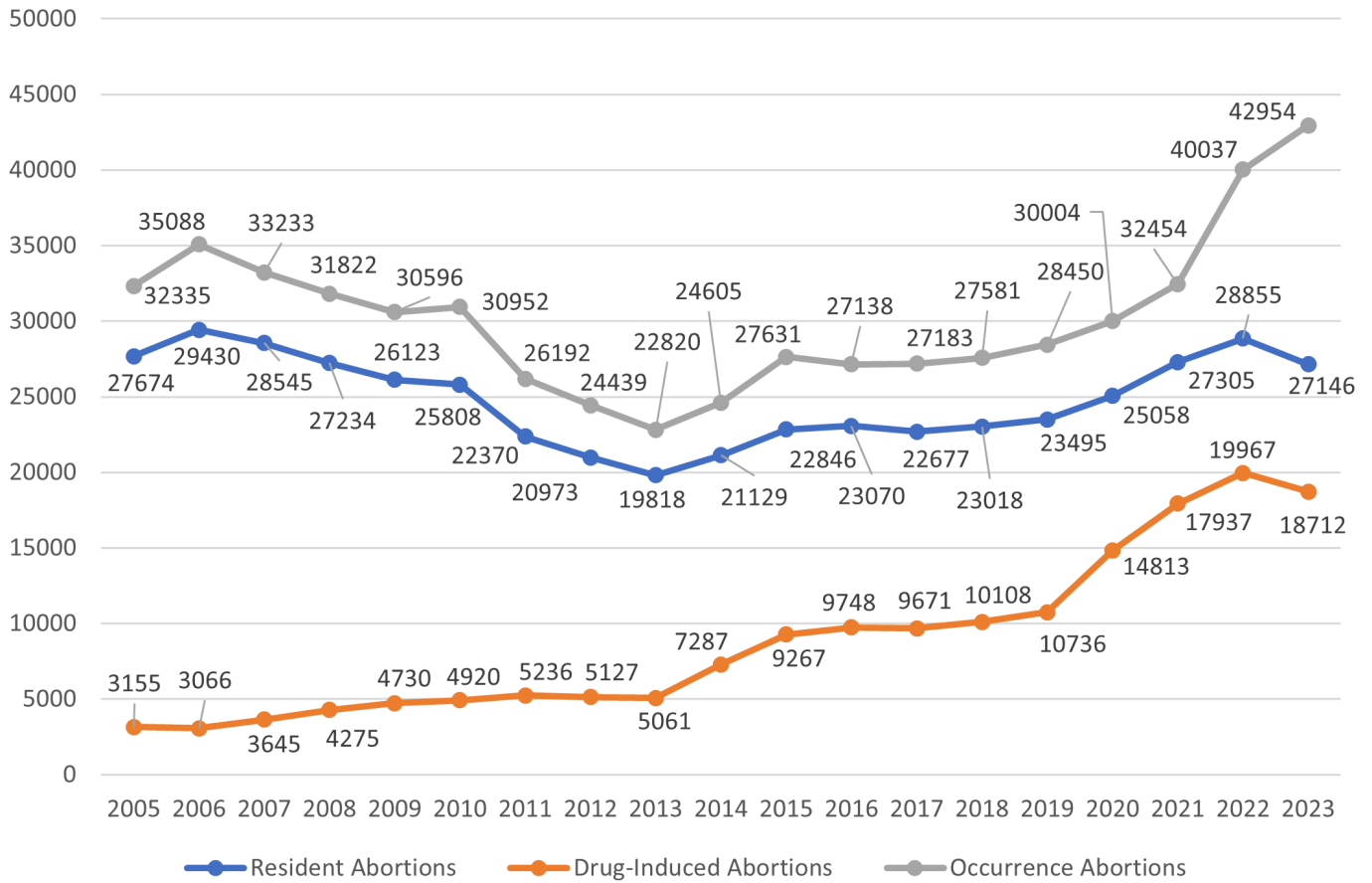
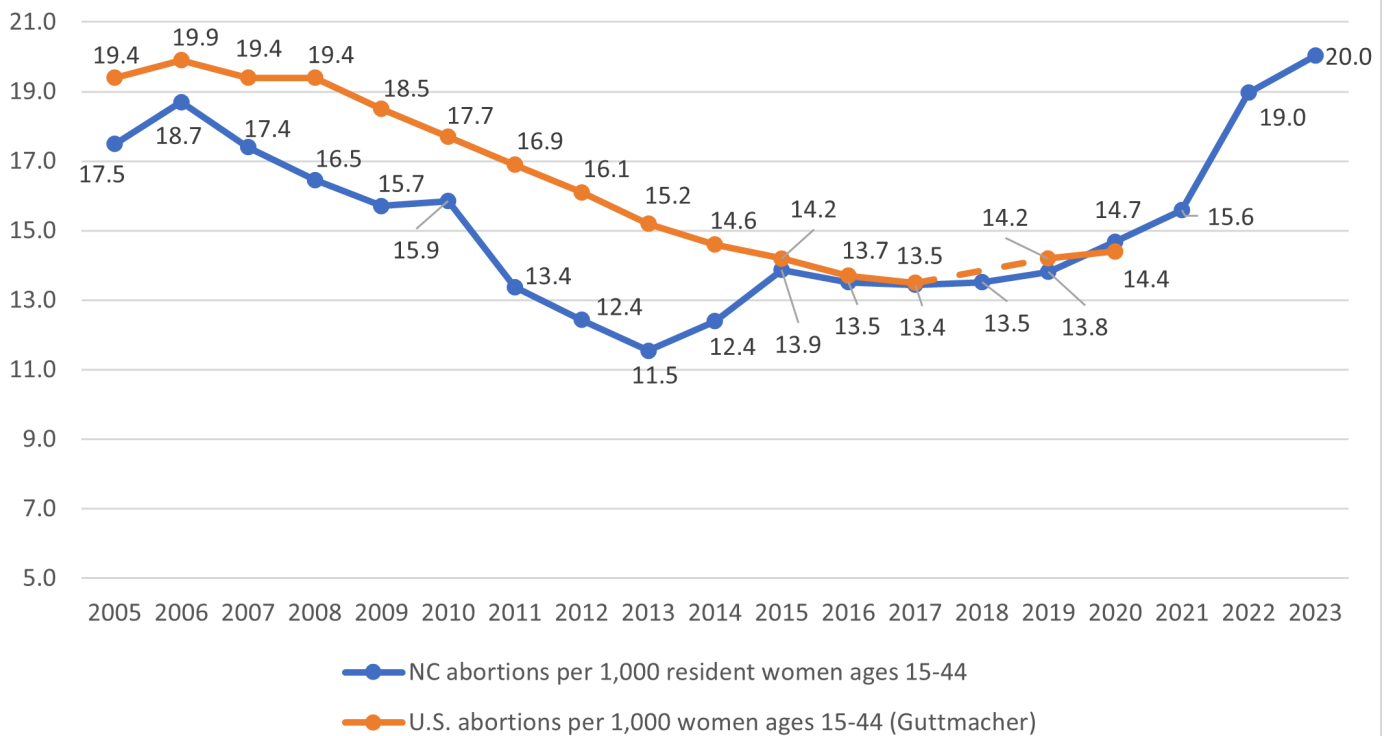


Figure 2. North Carolina abortion rate 2005-2023



1. National rates were calculated by Guttmacher Institute. North Carolina rates were calculated by CLI using the following formula: (total number of abortions performed in North Carolina ÷ number of resident women ages 15-44 [based on most recent population estimates]) x 1,000. Rates may differ slightly from previous CLI articles due to revised population estimates. Population estimates were obtained using the CDC WONDER database. Estimates for 2005-2009 are intercensal estimates of the July 1 resident population. Estimates for 2010-2019 are Vintage 2020 postcensal estimates of the July 1 resident population. Estimates for 2020-2023 are Vintage 2023 postcensal estimates of the July 1 resident population. Estimates were produced by the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics.
2. North Carolina's report does not list what states do or do not share data regarding North Carolina women who travel to other states to obtain an abortion. As data in the section titled "2023 Guttmacher Data" suggests, North Carolina's count is a significant undercount, and many states do not share data with North Carolina.
3. The number of providers is included in this section not to say that the abortions occurring in the mentioned counties were certainly performed by the providers in the county (as the report doesn't include that confirmation) but rather to give the reader some general context about abortion access in the counties. Provider totals do not include hospitals or physician offices not listed in databases that compile abortion provider locations in different states, but do include Planned Parenthood locations, independent abortion centers, and hospitals/doctor's offices included in databases like Abortion Finder and Ineedana. Abortions are reported by the state as occurring in counties that don't have any operative abortion centers. However, these counties have hospitals/doctor's offices that perform abortions in certain cases but aren't included in the aforementioned databases.
4. This information is updated as of June 30, 2025.
5. The Guttmacher Institute notes that their monthly abortion totals by states are estimates and that each state's estimate is within a range of uncertainty. Guttmacher also notes that their estimates do not reflect abortions obtained by women in states with total abortion bans under shield laws in effect in pro-abortion states. This information is updated as of June 30, 2025.
6. Guttmacher's travel and residence data can be found [here](#) (State\_Abortion\_Travel\_2023.csv).
7. The abortion reports caution that abortions were underreported in 2011-2014.

Click here to view reporting from: [2022](#) [2021](#) [2020](#) [2019](#) [2018](#) [2017](#)