

Texas Medical Board Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media contact: communications@tmb.state.tx.us

Customer service: 512-305-7030 or 800-248-4062

Texas Medical Board Reiterates Rules and Responsibilities for Physicians Caring for Pregnant Women

Statement from TMB President Dr. Sherif Zaafran, M.D., FASA

“Earlier this year, the Board adopted new rules regarding Texas’ pro-life laws. These rules specifically address ectopic pregnancy at any location in the body and confirm that procedures to treat this condition are not abortions, as state laws already make clear. Additionally, the rules provide that when addressing a condition that is or may become emergent in nature, a physician is not required to wait to provide medical care until that mother’s life is in immediate danger or her major bodily function is at immediate risk. This clarification is consistent with the leading opinion of the Texas Supreme Court on this matter. Physicians must use reasonable medical judgement, consistent with the patient’s informed consent and with the oath each physician swears, to do what is medically necessary when responding to an active, imminent, or potential medical emergency that places a pregnant woman in danger of death or serious risk of substantial impairment of a major bodily function. Unfortunately, that sometimes includes induced termination of pregnancy.

“The new rules provide guidance to physicians on documenting these circumstances so that if the Board receives a complaint, physicians can be properly equipped to describe the actions they took. I strongly urge physicians to thoroughly review applicable rules and statutes, so they have an accurate understanding of the requirements in these medical scenarios and, more importantly, take necessary action to save the lives or major bodily functions of pregnant women in Texas. As with all medical scenarios, complaints of physicians failing to meet the standard of care in treating patients can be submitted to the Board, and all complaints will be reviewed for investigation and action by the Board. The consequences can be especially serious if failing to meet the standard of care leads to the patient’s death or serious bodily harm. Texas physicians are known for their provision of world-class care for their patients, and we value the critical role they play in the lives of all Texans. According to Texas Health and Human Services reports on induced terminations of pregnancy from August 2022 to June 2024, there were 119 documented instances of care provided under these exceptions, and to date, no physician has had disciplinary action taken against them by the Texas Medical Board for their medical intervention in these cases.”

On June 21, 2024, the Texas Medical Board adopted amendments to 22 TAC 165 by adding Subchapter B, new rule section 165.7-165.9.

For complete text of the rule visit: [22 TAC 165](#)

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