

Vermont Commission on Women, Reproductive Justice and Sexual Health Committee – As approved
January 9, 2025

Reproductive Justice [Replacing Reproductive Rights Adopted January 11, 2001]

The Vermont Commission on Women (VCW) supports a broad view of reproductive justice and sexual health rights. This includes:

- Fully protecting access to reproductive and sexual health services.
- Recognizing that social and economic support is key to real reproductive rights.
- Acknowledging that threats to these rights worsen racial and socioeconomic inequities.

The VCW advocates for the full protection, promotion, and fulfillment of reproductive and sexual health rights of all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. We also note that restrictions on reproductive freedom, contraception, and abortion have the biggest impact on women and those who can become pregnant.

The term "reproductive justice" was coined by Black women who have led this movement for decades. SisterSong defines it as the human right to:

- Maintain personal bodily autonomy. Have children.
- Not have children.
- Raise our children in safe and sustainable communities.

The VCW embraces "reproductive justice" to uphold these ideals. We commit to challenge the systems that limit access for marginalized women. However, we recognize our organization's history as predominantly white and focused on white women's rights, in a predominantly white state. We aim to support the reproductive justice movement and its leaders, but we do not claim to speak for it.

The VCW sees a historic threat to abortion and reproductive rights in the U.S. This follows the Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* decision, which overturned *Roe v. Wade*. While we focus on the needs of Vermonters, we strive to keep Vermont safe for women seeking to exercise their reproductive rights, no matter where they come from.