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Trump Administration Seeks to End VA Abortion Coverage

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), under the direction of President Donald Trump’s administration, has proposed a rollback of abortion coverage for veterans and their families, arguing that the procedure is not an essential medical service.

The VA published the proposed rule change on Monday and opened it to public comment until September 3. The agency stated that the move aims to ensure the department provides “only needed medical services” to veterans and their dependents. While the VA

would still allow abortions in life-threatening situations in line with laws in many states, it would no longer cover abortions in cases involving rape or incest.

Critics argue the proposed change could leave millions of veterans and their families without necessary reproductive healthcare. Amy Friedrich-Karnik, director of federal policy at the Guttmacher Institute, said the decision would increase barriers to care. “Veterans have historically faced significant barriers to reproductive health care, and with the current patchwork of abortion bans and restrictions across the country, these barriers are even steeper today,” she stated.

The current abortion coverage policy was introduced in 2022 by the Biden administration, following the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. That policy allowed the VA to provide abortion services even in states where abortion is otherwise banned. Now, the VA says this position is legally questionable, noting that Congress has not explicitly authorized abortion services within the department.

The proposed rollback aligns VA coverage with other federal healthcare programs such as Medicaid and TriCare, which cover active-duty military and their families, both of which restrict abortion except in limited circumstances.

According to VA records, roughly 100 veterans and 40 dependents use the abortion benefit each year, a fraction of the department’s 2022 estimate, which predicted around 1,000 annual cases.

The move has garnered support from conservative groups. The Alliance Defending Freedom, a right-leaning legal organisation, urged the VA in July to eliminate abortion coverage. The group argued that abortion funding diverts vital resources away from other medical services for veterans.

If finalised, this policy shift could mark a significant reversal in veterans’ healthcare access under the Trump administration. The proposal underscores broader efforts to limit federal support for abortion in the wake of evolving state-level restrictions and national political shifts.