

# The Right to Toxic-Free Choice

## Reproductive Justice

Reproductive justice is “the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities,” according to SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective. In the current political landscape, people’s rights to reproductive justice are threatened in many ways; one of these threats includes exposure to harmful chemicals that harm our bodies and limit our reproductive choices.

In Michigan, the reckless use of toxic chemicals has contaminated drinking water across the state. One of the most concerning types of pollution is from per and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), which build up in people’s bodies, are harmful to human health, and take a very long time to break down in the environment. People are exposed to PFAS through many sources including drinking water, food, and consumer products.

More than one million people in Michigan drink water with PFAS contamination. The state is developing drinking water standards for 7 PFAS chemicals — this is an important first step in getting PFAS out of our drinking water. Join us to help protect people who can get pregnant, children, and people with chronic health conditions from the harmful effects of PFAS.

Due to systematic disenfranchisement from political and economic decision making, marginalized communities often bear an unjust burden when it comes to dealing with toxic pollution — from the citing of heavily polluting industries in low income neighborhoods, to disparate health outcomes among people of color. This is why it’s important for polluters to pay for the damage they have done in our state, while we protect vulnerable members of our communities from the cost of cleaning up PFAS.



## PFAS chemicals are linked to health problems:

- damage to the body’s reproductive systems:
- thyroid problems
- impaired sperm production
- shorter pregnancies and smaller baby birth weight
- increased risk of pregnancy-related hypertension
- impair mammary gland development and the ability to breastfeed

## Next steps

Michigan is facing a crisis caused by the historic and ongoing uses of PFAS. Many people living near or downstream from industrial sites, airports, and military bases have permanently contaminated water supplies. Other industries like refineries, landfills, and even farmland are ongoing sources of PFAS into our environment. Other chemicals are legally used in food packaging, carpet, raincoats and other household products.

Advocates are working to fix the corrupt system which allows corporations to make and discharge PFAS and other poorly studied chemicals that threaten our food, water and our health.

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