

**146E.2 Abortion — fetal heartbeat — exceptions.**

1. Except in the case of a medical emergency or fetal heartbeat exception, a physician shall not perform an abortion unless the physician has first complied with the prerequisites of [chapter 146A](#) and has tested the pregnant woman as specified in [this subsection](#), to determine if a fetal heartbeat is detectable.

a. In testing for a detectable fetal heartbeat, the physician shall perform an abdominal ultrasound, necessary to detect a fetal heartbeat according to standard medical practice and including the use of medical devices, as determined by standard medical practice and specified by rule of the board of medicine.

b. Following the testing of the pregnant woman for a detectable fetal heartbeat, the physician shall inform the pregnant woman, in writing, of all of the following:

(1) Whether a fetal heartbeat was detected.

(2) That if a fetal heartbeat was detected, an abortion is prohibited.

c. Upon receipt of the written information, the pregnant woman shall sign a form acknowledging that the pregnant woman has received the information as required under [this subsection](#).

2. a. A physician shall not perform an abortion upon a pregnant woman when it has been determined that the unborn child has a detectable fetal heartbeat, unless, in the physician's reasonable medical judgment, a medical emergency or fetal heartbeat exception exists.

b. Notwithstanding paragraph "a", if a physician determines that the probable postfertilization age, as defined in [section 146B.1](#), of the unborn child is twenty or more weeks, the physician shall not perform an abortion upon a pregnant woman when it has been determined that the unborn child has a detectable fetal heartbeat, unless in the physician's reasonable medical judgment the pregnant woman has a condition which the physician deems a medical emergency, as defined in [section 146B.1](#), or the abortion is necessary to preserve the life of an unborn child.

3. A physician shall retain in the woman's medical record all of the following:

a. Documentation of the testing for a fetal heartbeat as specified in [subsection 1](#) and the results of the fetal heartbeat test.

b. The pregnant woman's signed form acknowledging that the pregnant woman received the information as required under [subsection 1](#).

4. [This section](#) shall not be construed to impose civil or criminal liability on a woman upon whom an abortion is performed in violation of [this section](#).

5. The board of medicine shall adopt rules pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) to administer [this section](#).

[2023 Acts, 1st Ex, ch 1, §2, 3](#)