

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE GOING TO COURT

Please review the following questions and come up with thoughtful answers before meeting with your lawyer. These questions will help prepare you for the kinds of questions your lawyer and the judge may ask you.

Your answers will help convince the judge that you understand all of the options available to you with respect to your pregnancy, that you are mature enough to make important decisions about your life, and that notifying a parent about your abortion is not in your best interest. Your lawyer will explain this to you in detail and you will have the opportunity to ask him or her any questions you may have.

Some of these questions may seem personal, inappropriate or make you feel uncomfortable. We encourage you to answer them as best as you can because they may be asked of you in court.

- How did you first learn that you were pregnant?
 - When did you have your sonogram?
 - Did you receive pregnancy options counseling?
 - How far along were you in your pregnancy when you had your sonogram?
 - Were you using birth control at the time you became pregnant?
 - If not, why?
 - Was your partner using a condom?
 - If not, why?
 - What type of birth control or family planning method will you use in the future?
 - Would you consider abstinence?
-
- Do you go to school?
 - What grade are you in?
 - How do you do in school?
 - What kinds of grades do you get?
 - What classes do you like best?
 - Do you think you will graduate from high school? When?
 - What do you want to do after high school?
 - Will you work?
 - What kind of work do you want to do?
 - If you are not in school now, what grade have you completed?
 - Why did you leave school?
 - Do you plan to go back to school sometime?

- Do you have a job?
 - If so, what is your job?
 - Why are you working?
 - Was your decision to get a job yours or your parents'?
 - What do you like about your job?
 - Have you ever had a job in the past?
 - If so, what type of a job? What were your responsibilities?
 - Are you involved in any activities, clubs, or sports after school?
 - If so, what are they?
 - Are you a leader in any of these activities?
 - Do you do any volunteer work?
 - If so, what kind? What type of responsibilities do you have?
-
- What are the top three reasons why you can't ask at least one of your parents for consent for your decision? (Do not worry about this question if your parents are deceased or missing)
 - Why do you want an abortion?
 - Is anyone pressuring you to have an abortion? If so, who?
 - Do you know what the procedure is for the abortion that you would have according to your stage in pregnancy?
 - Can you describe the procedure?
 - Describe the possible risks or complications of this medical procedure.
 - Have you talked to anyone about going with you when you have your abortion?
 - Who do you want to go with you?
 - Who will drive you to the clinic and back?
 - Can you pay for the abortion? How?
 - If you cannot pay for the abortion, have you applied for funding?
 - If you have any physical problems after the abortion, whom will you contact for help?
 - What has your clinic instructed you to do if you experience complications?
 - A person may experience a number of feelings after an abortion: relief, sadness, peace, anger, gratefulness, guilt, confidence, doubt, depression, renewed energy, etc. If you experience negative feelings that affect you greatly, what do you plan to do? Whom will you talk to? How will you take care of yourself if you are feeling sad?
-
- Whom do you live with?
 - What kind of contact do you have with your mother? If you have no contact, explain why.

- What kind of contact do you have with your father? If you have no contact, explain why.
- If you don't live with one parent, how is your relationship with him/her?
- How is that parent's relationship and communication with the parent or guardian with whom you live?
- Have you talked to anyone (friends, relatives, teachers, counselors, or other adults) about your pregnancy?
- If so, who? What did they say?
- Does the male involved in your pregnancy know that you are pregnant?
- What was his reaction?
- Does he know about your decision to terminate your pregnancy?
- If you told him, what was his reaction?
- Does he support your decision?
- Have you ever discussed with your parents or guardians that you are sexually active?
- If so, what did they say?
- Have you ever talked to your parents or guardians about what would happen if you became pregnant as a teenager?
- If so, what was said?
- What do you think your parents would say if they found out that you are pregnant?
- What do you think that they would say if they found out that you want an abortion?
- Do you have any brothers or sisters?
- How old are they? Who takes care of them?
- Do you talk to them about personal problems?
- What type of responsibilities do you have at home?
- Do you take care of your parents or other family members?
- What is life like at home?
- Do you get along with your parents or guardians?
- Do you talk to them about your day?
- Do you talk to them about any personal problems?
- How have your parents or guardians reacted to you in the past when you came to them with a problem? When you've had a crisis situation? When you've been in trouble?
- What was the worst punishment you have received from a parent?
- How have your parents or guardians reacted to any of your brothers or sisters who came to them with a problem? When they/he/she have been in crisis situations? When they/he/she have been in trouble?
- Do you have any religious beliefs that abortion? If so, can you be at peace with your decision?

- What are the alternatives to abortion?
 - Why do you want to have an abortion instead of carrying your pregnancy to term and giving the baby up for adoption?
 - What do you know about adoption?
 - Describe the difference between open and closed adoptions.
 - What are the resources available to you in your community if you chose adoption? (Maternity homes, adoption counseling, etc.)
 - What do you know about choosing to become a teen parent?
 - List the state programs to help you if you wanted to become a teen parent.
 - How could you collect child support?
-
- Do you know if you have any medical problems that could make your pregnancy more difficult? If so, what are they?
 - Whom have you discussed this with?
 - Are you taking any medication?
 - Have you ever been treated for a mental illness?
 - If so, what was the diagnosis and when were you treated?
 - Do you think that you have a mental illness?
 - Are you taking any medications?