

Example callout to help newsrooms reach families impacted by hospital drug testing at childbirth

Courtesy of Nicole Lewis

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Feel free to adapt this language for your local coverage needs (just please credit The Marshall Project somewhere on your callout).

About [70,000 mothers were referred to law enforcement](#) between 2018 and 2023 for allegedly using substances during their pregnancies, an investigation by The Marshall Project reporters Shoshana Walter and Jill Castellano revealed for the first time.

While many of the patients likely used illicit drugs, thousands of others were referred to police as a result of positive tests caused by prescribed medications. In some instances, women were referred over positive tests caused by fentanyl from their epidurals, poppy seeds or common over-the-counter medications.

Civil rights attorneys and women's rights advocates warn that these referrals increase the likelihood that more people will face criminal consequences given the increasing surveillance and scrutiny of women's reproductive choices and outcomes.

[OUR ORGANIZATION] is committed to reporting on all of the ways pregnancies — and all the attendant decisions — can be criminalized. If you've had a brush with law enforcement during your pregnancy, labor or delivery, we want to hear from you. You can fill out the form below. Or if you'd like to get in touch directly with us, you can email us at [EMAIL].

We take your privacy seriously — your story will not be made public without your permission. Once it's submitted, a journalist may follow up with you for more details.

1. First and last name? (short text)
2. In which state do you live? (short text or dropdown)
3. Were you arrested or criminally investigated after a false-positive drug test during pregnancy, labor or delivery? Tell us about what happened. (paragraph text)
4. What consequences did you face as a result of being accused of drug use during pregnancy? Please check all that apply. (multi-select)
 - a. Threatened with arrest
 - b. Arrested and booked into jail
 - c. Criminally charged
 - d. Temporarily separated from my newborn or other children or barred from being alone with them
 - e. Convicted of a criminal charge
 - f. Permanently lost custody of my children
 - g. Other
5. What other consequences did you experience? (paragraph text) *Note: This question uses conditional logic to appear when the answer to question four is "other."*

6. Our journalists are committed to reporting on the ways pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes can be criminalized. Are there any other aspects of this issue you think we should know about? (paragraph text)
7. What is the best way to reach you? (single select)
 - a. Phone number
 - b. Email address
8. Email (short text) *Note: This question uses conditional logic to appear when the answer to question seven is "email."*
9. Phone number (short text) *Note: This question uses conditional logic to appear when the answer to question seven is "phone number."*