

BLACK WOMEN-LED GROUPS LAUNCH STATEWIDE BIRTH EQUITY INITIATIVE IN ALABAMA



By [Angelina Tun](#)  December 10, 2025  0 comments

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — A coalition of Black women-led organizations announced the launch of the Alabama Birth Equity Initiative, a statewide effort aimed at addressing the state's maternal health crisis by confronting systemic barriers to safe pregnancy and childbirth.

The initiative is led by the Yellowhammer Fund in partnership with Margins: Women Helping Black Women, Oasis Women's Health, and the Alabama Birth Center. According to a press release, the groups are combining midwifery services, mutual aid, community leadership development and policy advocacy in an effort to improve outcomes for Black women and birthing people, who face some of the highest risks during pregnancy and childbirth in the state.



The coalition describes Alabama as one of the “most hostile reproductive landscapes in the United States,” citing punitive laws, rural hospital closures and chronic underinvestment that have made pregnancy increasingly dangerous. The initiative seeks to respond by building a community-centered model of care rooted in midwifery practices and support systems designed by and for those most affected.

Yellowhammer Fund Executive Director Jenice Fountain said the crisis extends beyond access to medical providers. “Alabama’s maternal health crisis isn’t just about a lack of doctors or closed hospitals—it’s about the way policy, poverty, and racism have worked together to make safe birth a privilege instead of a right,” Fountain said in the report. She said the initiative aims to “change the conditions that put our lives at risk—by building care systems led by Black women, rooted in community, and strong enough to last for generations.”

Celida Soto, executive director of Margins: Women Helping Black Women, said the effort centers on the everyday conditions that shape health long before labor begins. “Safe birth starts long before labor

—it starts with stable housing, reliable transportation, respectful care, and communities that have what they need to thrive,” Soto said.

The coalition outlined several components of the effort, including increasing the number of Black midwives in Alabama by launching and expanding apprenticeship programs with scholarships, stipends and culturally competent preceptors. The initiative also calls for the deployment of new mobile health units to reach rural communities that have long lacked reproductive health services.

The effort aims to expand access to competent maternal health care in underserved counties. The coalition also plans to continue and strengthen mutual aid networks, including 24-hour food pantries and emergency assistance for housing, utilities and child care, which organizers describe as essential supports for healthy pregnancies.

Policy advocacy is another major focus, with the coalition backing Medicaid expansion, protections for birth centers, reforms to midwifery licensure and changes to laws that criminalize pregnancy outcomes.

Coalition leaders said the initiative is designed not only to improve maternal health outcomes but also to expand community power and dismantle systemic barriers that have affected Black women in Alabama for generations.

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Angelina Tun is a rising senior at UC Davis, studying Political Science and French on a pre-law track. Growing up in Los Angeles, she's always been fascinated by how stories, creativity, and justice intersect, and hopes to one day work in intellectual property or entertainment law. She joined the Davis Vanguard to see the legal system in action and contribute to meaningful community advocacy. When she's not in class or at the courthouse, you can find her reading, binging sitcoms, working out, or relaxing by the beach.

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The Sacramento Homeless Union filed a federal civil rights lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California. The complaint alleges the City of Sacramento unlawfully terminated its Motel Shelter Program, resulting in the mass displacement of vulnerable residents, including families with children, seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities, on June 1.

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