

State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, New York State is a national leader in supporting pregnant persons through innovative initiatives and continues to build on this support by becoming the first state to observe an awareness day focused on syphilis during pregnancy; and

Whereas, the transmission of syphilis from a pregnant person to their unborn infant, known as congenital syphilis, is preventable with equitable access to health care and treatment; failure to obtain such resources may cause severe medical complications during pregnancy, including infant birth defects and death; and

Whereas, rates of syphilis during pregnancy have increased sharply in New York State and across the United States, impacting the health and wellness of pregnant persons and their unborn infants; in New York State, congenital syphilis diagnoses increased by 152% from 2019 – 2023 compared to the 26% increase from 2014 – 2022; reported syphilis-related stillbirths and infant deaths have also increased from 2019 – 2023; and

Whereas, syphilis infections can result in mild symptoms that are easily mistaken for other illnesses or go entirely unnoticed; for this reason, raising awareness, early detection, and timely treatment are crucial to eliminate syphilis during pregnancy and improve care for pregnant persons and infants; and

Whereas, pregnant persons, individuals of child-bearing capacity, and their sexual partners are encouraged to establish sexual health routines that include regular screenings; health care providers play a critical role in efforts to eliminate syphilis during pregnancy by adopting clinical practices that prioritize timely testing, open dialogues, and stigma-free care, especially for marginalized and majorly affected communities; and

Whereas, in 2023, New York State convened the Congenital Syphilis Elimination Strategic Planning Group, comprised of community-based organizations, health care providers, and persons impacted by syphilis during pregnancy, to implement a coordinated and comprehensive framework to eliminate this public health concern; the following year, New York State amended Public Health Law §2308 to require pregnant persons to undergo at least three syphilis screenings during their pregnancy to encourage detection and early treatment; and

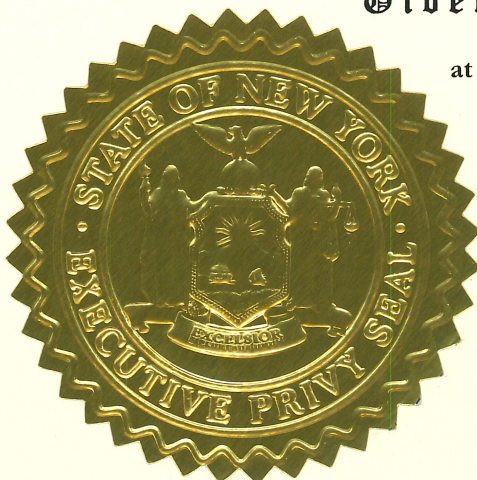
Whereas, Syphilis During Pregnancy Awareness Day serves as a powerful reminder to all residents about the importance of prevention, detection, and treatment to improve health outcomes for pregnant persons and their infants; and

Now, Therefore, I, Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim August 25, 2025 as

SYPHILIS DURING PREGNANCY AWARENESS DAY

in the Empire State.

Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State
at the Capitol in the City of Albany this thirteenth day
of August in the year two thousand twenty-five.



Kathy Hochul

Governor

Karen Persichilli Keogh

Secretary to the Governor
Karen Persichilli Keogh