

Jewish Values and Reproductive Justice

Jewish values compel NCJW to use the reproductive justice framework in our advocacy. The [reproductive justice](#) framework was developed in 1994 by a collective of black women at the Illinois Pro-Choice Alliance Conference in Chicago. This framework moves beyond the legal right to access key reproductive health services. It compels us to work towards a reality where all people have the social, political, and economic power and resources to make healthy decisions about their gender, bodies, sexuality and families for themselves and their communities.

Use the following Jewish values when crafting letters to the editor, op-eds, sample sermons or articles, and in meetings with lawmakers to raise reproductive justice issues.

Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof: The Pursuit of Justice

- **Pursue Justice for All:** As Jews, we are taught, “tzedek tzedek tirdof,” justice, justice you shall pursue (Deuteronomy 16:20). We must not stand idly by while barriers to health care place any individual’s autonomy, health, economic security, or well-being at risk. We must heed this call especially for the most marginalized who face structural barriers, such as racism, classism, and ableism, to exercising their human rights.
- **Being a co-conspirator for liberation:** This teaching has been interpreted to urge that we pursue justice in a way that does not reinforce the same systems of oppression we are trying to uproot. Historically, we know what it is like to be excluded and oppressed. To be strong allies, we must engage with, listen to, and learn from those who are being marginalized and oppressed in our communities today. As an ally to the reproductive justice movement, NCJW seeks to promote legislative measures that advance justice; combat regressive policies; and dismantle the deep-rooted systems of white supremacy and inequality from which harmful policies arise.

V’ahavta L’reacha Kamocha: Love your Neighbor as Yourself

- **Listen, Learn, Speak Out:** NCJW has a longstanding history of speaking up when we experience or witness injustice, of educating our own constituency, and engaging in

community. As Jews we are obligated to “love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt,” (Leviticus 19:34). When we “love the stranger,” we are compelled to look past our differences and toward our shared humanity. Considering the reproductive justice framework, loving the stranger may mean delving more deeply into the role of listener and learner, lifting up the voices of marginalized communities in order to work together towards action. NCJW is committed to continuing this legacy of education and advocacy through building bridges of partnership and allyship with those who lead this movement.

Kavod Ha Bri'ot: Respect and Dignity for all Human Beings

- **Ensure Fair Treatment for All:** As each of us is made in the image of G-d — B'tselem Elohim (Genesis 1:26) — every single person's health is paramount and unassailable; we have an obligation to care for and to protect our bodies and our health, and ensure all others can do the same. This means that every human being deserves fair treatment and access to the resources they need to make their own decisions about their body, family, and future without political interference or economic coercion.
- **Safeguard Individual Religious Liberty:** Our commitment to supporting each person's moral autonomy also relates to protecting religious liberty for all, a right integrally bound to reproductive freedom. NCJW works to ensure each person may make their own moral and faith-informed decisions about their body, family, and reproductive life. In particular, NCJW is committed to eliminating disparities in access to the full range of reproductive health care, including contraception and abortion.