

A message from Glean

Learn how AI agents will affect your bottom line — for the be
[the livestream.](#)



Jul 31, 2023 - News

Iowa's maternal death rate rises as birthing units close



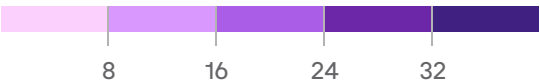
Jason Clayworth, Oriana González

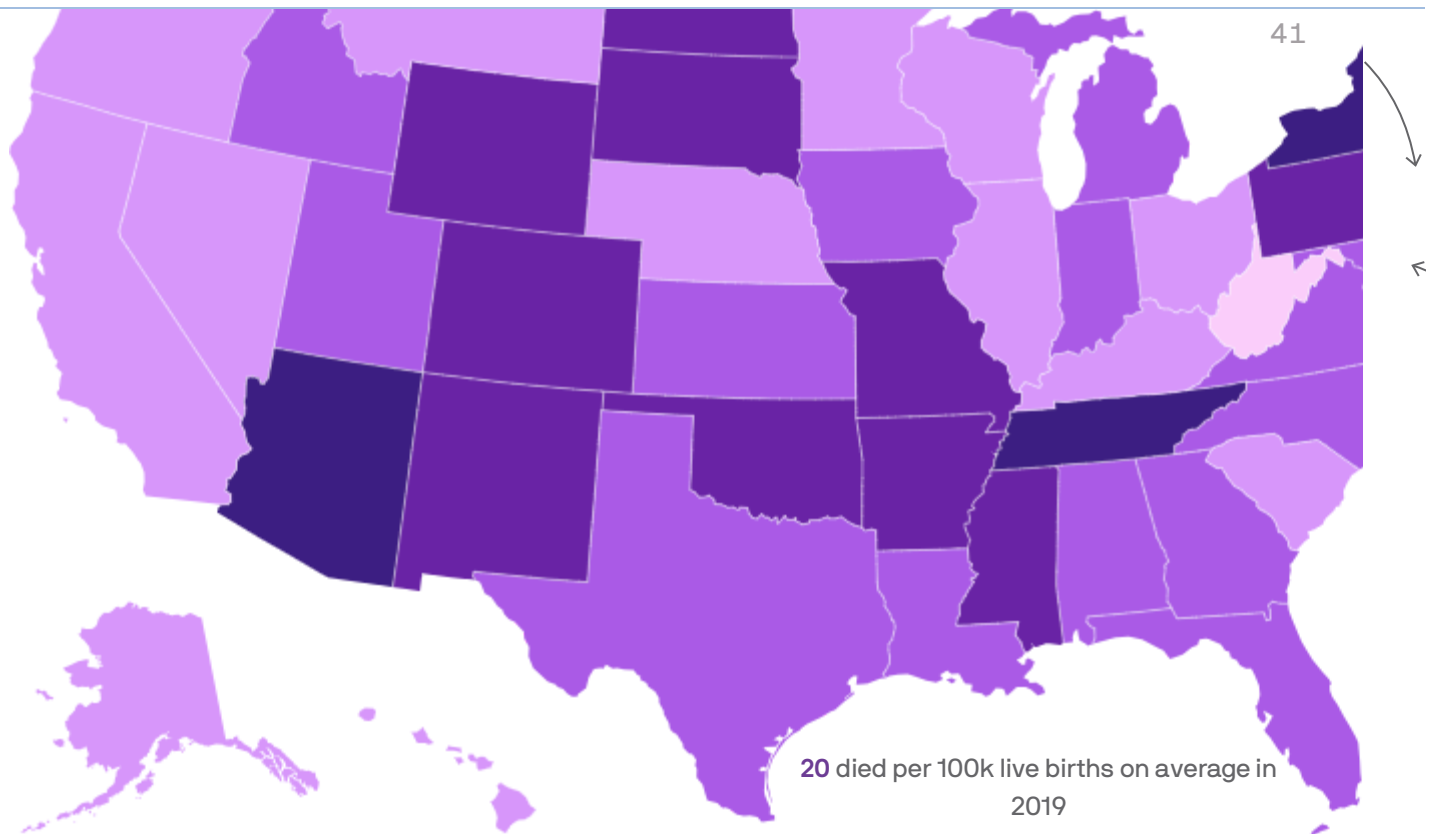


Estimated maternal mortality rate in 2019, by state

Women ages 10 to 54 who died within one year of live birth

Deaths per 100k births





Data: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation; Map: Tory Lysik / Axios

Maternal mortality rates in Iowa increased between 1999 and 2019, according to a [JAMA study](#) providing the first state-level breakdowns by ethnic group.

By the numbers: The overall number of deaths per 100,000 live births in Iowa increased from 10 to nearly 22 during the 20-year study period.

Details: Maternal mortality is defined as a death that takes place during birth or up to a year later.

- The study looked at pregnant individuals ages 10 to 54.
- Common causes of maternal death include mental health-related conditions and cardiac ailments.

Zoom in: The rate among Iowa's American Indian and Alaska Native populations rose from 26.5 to 139; from about 5.1 to 8.9 among Asian people, and 8.3 to 17.6 among

had spiked to as high as 63.2 during some years of the study.

State of play: Labor and delivery units have shuttered in multiple rural counties across the state in recent years.

- Expectant mothers in those areas are [less likely to access](#) prenatal care, according to a study by the University of Iowa.

The big picture: Maternal mortality rates across the U.S. more than doubled between 1999 and 2019, with states in the Midwest, Great Plains and South accounting for significant increases.

Advertisement

- Overall, there were an estimated 1,210 total U.S. maternal deaths in 2019, up dramatically from 505 in 1999.

Driving the news: American Indian and Alaska Native populations had the biggest increases, particularly in states in the middle of the country where such inequities "had not been previously highlighted," researchers wrote.

- "Often, states in the South are called out as having the worst maternal mortality rates in the nation, whereas California and Massachusetts have the best," said Allison Bryant, co-first study author. "But that doesn't tell the whole story."

Go deeper: [Maternal deaths widespread beyond the South](#)



Get more local stories in your inbox with [Axios Des Moines](#).

En

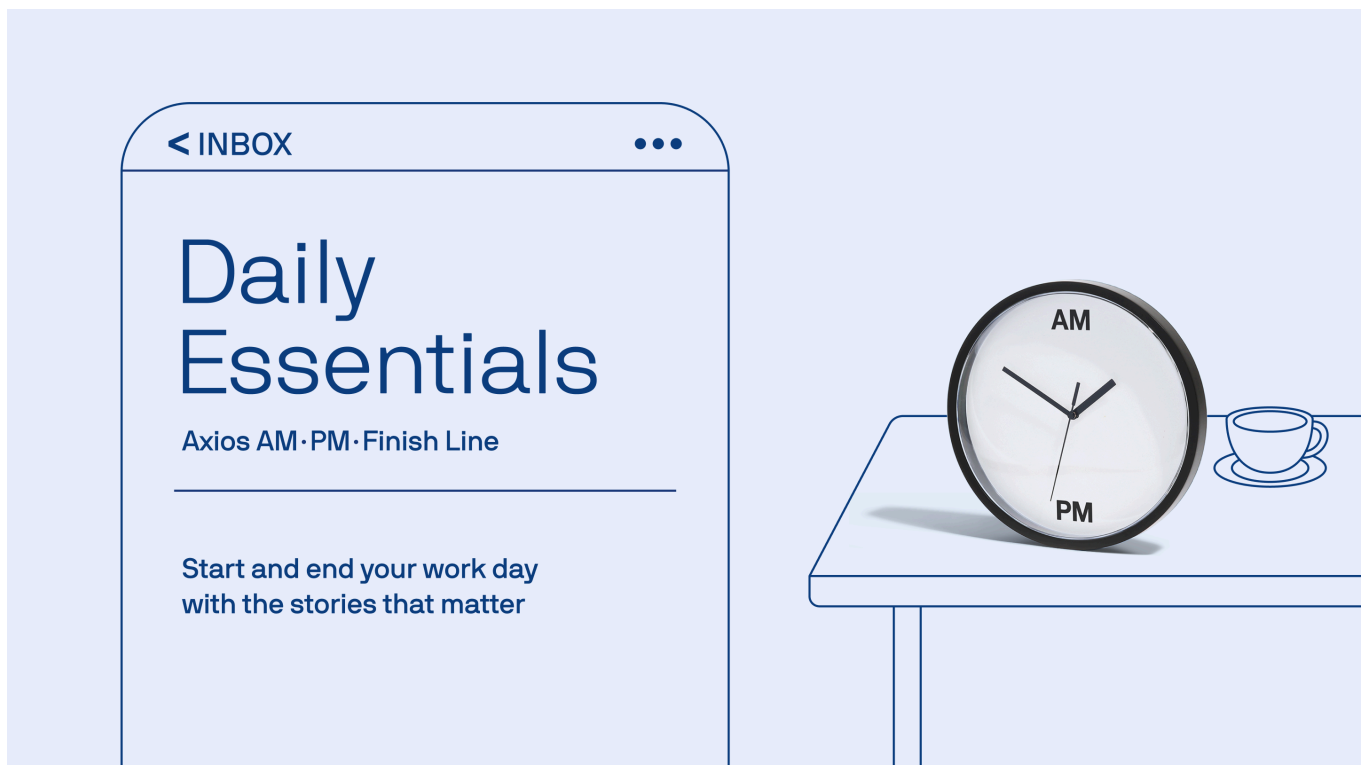
Subscribe



A message from Axios



Daily news worthy of your time



Stay up to speed on the topics shaping our lives in politics, tech, business, media, science and the world. Delivered every morning, afternoon and evening from Mike Allen, Jim VandeHei and Erica Pandey.

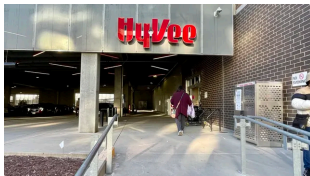
[Subscribe for free](#)



Des Moines among Iowa cities with record debt



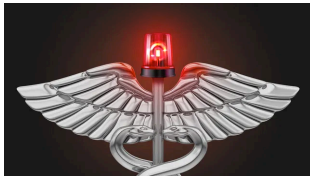
Feb 3, 2025



Hy-Vee shutteres all but one entrance to its downtown store



Jan 31, 2025



Polk County cuts ties with medical examiners, pays \$327K severance



Jan 29, 2025



New board game lounge and cafe brings nerdy vibes downtown



Jan 13, 2025



Wahlburgers to exit Hy-Vee stores



Jan 22, 2025

[More stories](#)

Explore Axios Newsletters

[About Axios](#)

[Advertise with us](#)

[Careers](#)

[Contact us](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[Axios Live](#)

[Axios Entertainment](#)

[Axios HQ](#)

[Privacy policy](#)

[Terms of use](#)

[Your Privacy Choices](#) 

Copyright Axios Media, 2024