

FACTSHEET 36: Voluntary Assisted Dying (Voluntary Euthanasia and Physician Assisted Dying) around the world

Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) laws have been introduced in 17 jurisdictions around the world. VAD includes voluntary euthanasia and physician assisted dying. Changes to the law have been achieved through a vote in Parliament, Court Rulings and Citizen Initiated Referendums (CIR).

When the parliamentary process fails to achieve legislative reform which has wide popular support, the matter can be put directly to the people through a ballot, usually carried out at the time of a general election. Three states in the USA have achieved law reform by CIR.

Voluntary Assisted Dying can be provided through voluntary euthanasia (VE), where medication is administered by a medical professional, or physician assisted dying (PAD), where medication is provided for the person to self administer.

Eight states in the USA and Washington DC have now legalised VAD, meaning that one in five people in the USA now live in areas where VAD is legal.

Country/State	Year enacted	Act	VE or PAD
Switzerland	1942/80s	Article 115 of the Swiss Criminal Code (1942)	PAD
Oregon (USA) (CIR)	1997	<i>Death with Dignity Act (1994)</i>	PAD
Netherlands	2002	<i>Termination of Life on Request and Assisted Suicide (Review Procedures) Act (2000)</i>	VE & PAD
Belgium	2002	<i>Act on Euthanasia (2002)</i>	PAD
Luxembourg	2009	Law of March 16 2009 <i>Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide</i>	VE & PAD
Washington State (USA) (CIR)	2009	<i>Death with Dignity Act (2008)</i>	PAD
Montana	2009	Court rulings	PAD
Colombia	1997/2015	Constitutional Court approval (1997), Health Ministry guidelines published (2015)	VE
Vermont (USA)	2013	<i>S77 Patient Choice and Control at End of Life (2013)</i>	PAD
Quebec (<i>Superseded by Canada 2016 law</i>)	2014	Bill 52, <i>An Act Respecting End of Life Care</i>	VE & PAD
California	2016	<i>End of Life Option Act</i>	PAD
Canada	2016	<i>Medical Assistance in Dying Act</i>	VE & PAD
Colorado (USA)(CIR)	2016	<i>End of Life Options Act</i>	VE & PAD

Washington DC (USA)	2017	<i>Death with Dignity Act (2016)</i>	PAD
Hawaii	2018	<i>Our Care, Our Choice</i>	PAD
New Jersey (USA)	2019	<i>Medical Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill Act (2019)</i>	PAD
Maine (USA)	2019	<i>Death with Dignity Act (2019)</i>	PAD
Victoria (Australia)	2019	<i>Voluntary Assisted Dying Act (2017)</i>	PAD, VE (if PAD not possible)