**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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**Q What is RTLACO?**

**A The Right to Life Action Coalition of Ohio is an association of prolife organizations which collaborate on advocacy for the right to life in law and public policy. We engage at the federal, state, and local levels. We are officially a 501(c)(4) organization, i.e., we are recognized as a non-profit but donations to us are not tax-deductible to the donor.**

**Q Who are our member organizations?**

**A RTLACO currently has about 28 member organizations throughout the state of Ohio. Some of our more prominent members are:**

* **Right to Life of Greater Cincinnati**
* **Cleveland Right to Life**
* **Dayton Right to Life Society**
* **Greater Toledo Right to Life**
* **Created Equal**
* **Mission America**

**Q What is the relationship between RTLACO and our member organizations?**

**A Member organizations retain complete autonomy over their policies, finances, and programs. RTLACO is managed by a board of directors whose members are provided by our member organizations. RTLACO typically takes the lead on engagement with Ohio and federal public officials and advocacy for or against proposed laws and policies. Our members include both 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations.**

**Q What does RTLACO consist of?**

**A RTLACO consists of a board of directors (currently 17 members), from which a six-person executive committee manages day-to-day affairs. We are an entirely voluntary organization – we have no paid staff and no permanent office space. Our board members and other volunteers work from their homes and/or the member organizations with which they are affiliated.**

**Q What are the primary advocacy functions of RTLACO?**

**A We have three primary functions:**

1. **Identifying and endorsing prolife candidates for elective office.**
2. **Engaging with legislators to enact prolife laws.**
3. **Engaging with relevant executive branch agencies (e.g., the Ohio Department of Health) to monitor enforcement of existing laws and policies.**

**Q What is our endorsement policy for candidates?**

**A Candidates must truly earn our endorsement, both by their prior record and through the completion of a comprehensive survey. They must be in fundamental agreement with our RTLACO policy document [hot link to** [**https://www.rtlaohio.org/\_files/ugd/fe2a3a\_bf48ce921446453081cd49e0a2ae2033.pdf**](https://www.rtlaohio.org/_files/ugd/fe2a3a_bf48ce921446453081cd49e0a2ae2033.pdf)**] We do not endorse candidates simply because of their party affiliation and we do not feel obligated to endorse a candidate in every race. In short, we have great confidence that those candidates who do receive our endorsement are firmly committed to the protection of human life from conception to natural death.**

**Q Are member organizations required to support all advocacy positions, including the legislative agenda, of RTLACO?**

**A – No, that is the benefit of a coalition.  As independent organizations, our members can support, or not support, any specific bill or policy. However, because our members helped to set our legislative agenda and actively influenced the final consensus position, they can respect the process even though they may not fully agree with the RTLACO final position. Obviously, we do not expect members to be *opposing* our endorsed position.**

**Q How is RTLACO funded?**

**A Like other non-profits, the bulk of our revenue comes from donations from individuals and organizations, to include in-kind contributions. We also receive annual dues from our member organizations, which are nominal.**

**Q What is the relationship between RTLACO and Ohio Right to Life (ORTL)?**

**RTLACO was formed in 2017 largely from prolife organizations which were formerly chapters of Ohio Right to Life, who wanted to pursue a more aggressive strategy of advocacy. Although there is no formal relationship between RTLACO and ORTL, we are happy to work with any other right to life organization and we recognize the importance of unity and consensus among prolife groups if we expect to achieve our right to life goals. Some of our member organizations remain chapters of Ohio Right to Life and some are not.**

**Q How has the Supreme Court’s *Dobbs* decision of June 2022 impacted the legal right to life in Ohio?**

**A The *Dobbs* decision held as follows: “The Constitution does not confer a right to abortion; *Roe* and *Casey* are overruled; and the authority to regulate abortion is returned to the people and their elected representatives.” Thus, in the absence of any federal law governing abortion, Ohio law now solely determines the legality and availability of abortion. This places a new importance on the Ohio court system, in particular the Ohio Supreme Court. While the legislature has recently passed – and the governor signed – a number of prolife bills, most of them remain stalled in the courts. The most notable of these is the so-called Heartbeat Law (SB 23). Even with favorable court rulings on these laws, the optimal solution to banning abortion in Ohio is a constitutional amendment.**

**~~Q – To become a member organization of RTLACO are we encouraged to disaffiliate with any other statewide pro-life organization?~~**

**~~A – No.~~**

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**~~Q – As a coalition member, are we required to actively engage in and support the positions that the RTLACO advocates, on issues like traditional marriage or religious liberty?~~**

**~~A – No. On the other hand, you cannot be actively opposing our endorsed positions.~~**

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**~~Q – Must our organization formally adopt the~~**[**~~RTLACO Policy Document?~~**](https://www.rtlaohio.org/_files/ugd/fe2a3a_bf48ce921446453081cd49e0a2ae2033.pdf)

**~~A – No, as a member organization you should be in fundamental agreement with the principles stated in our Policy Document but it is not required that you conform your mission statement, or the focus of your mission activities, to the Policy Document’s stated objectives.~~**

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**~~Q – Why address controversial topics like contraception and IVF where there are many diverse opinions on these issues even within the pro-life community?~~**

**~~A – As one expands their understanding of the interconnectivity of these core issues and God’s design for family, our sexuality, and procreation, the more holistic our pro-life worldview becomes.~~**

**~~Q – As a coalition member, are we required to actively support the entire legislative agenda of the RTLACO?~~**

**~~A – No, that is the benefit of a coalition.  As an independent organization you can support, or not support, any specific bill.  Because you have helped to set our legislative agenda and actively influenced the final consensus position, you can respect the process even though you may not always fully agree with the RTLACO final position.~~**

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**~~Q – Are we required to submit our mailing list to RTLACO to become a member?~~**

**~~A – No, you simply need to let the RTLACO know the number of names you estimate are on your mailing list.~~**

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**~~Q - Couldn't a no-exceptions policy for candidates mean that pro-abortion candidates could be elected because a candidate that opposed abortion, but accepted exceptions, was not supported (i.e., imperfect but better than alternative)?~~**

**~~A – First, that you are pro-life and support exceptions is an oxymoron. On what basis do they form their pro-life beliefs? As pro-lifers we believe life begins at conception. Either there in an inalienable right to life or there is not. Either we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights, (chief among them the right to life) and as such it is the duty of governments to secure those rights; not nullify them because of the circumstances surrounding conception.  Neither candidate is pro-life, so you are choosing between the lesser of two evils.~~**

**~~As a pro-life organization, our endorsement should mean something. Our position is to be standard bearers, not king makers. We are not a proxy organization for a particular political party. One objective of the RTLACO is to build strong pro-life majorities in the house and senate and that takes time. Our goal is the abolition of abortion. It is not to elect and re-elect politicians who are not committed to that goal.~~**

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**~~Q – What is RTLACO’s relationship with Ohio Right to Life?~~**

**~~A – The majority of our individual member organizations currently affiliated with ORTL will remain affiliated and will obviously work to support their efforts to advance the cause of life whenever possible. There is strength in numbers and power in alliances. Whenever and wherever we can we will work with them to restore Ohio in the top 10 pro-life states in America. Currently, Ohio ranks number fourteen.~~**

**~~Q – Is it true that RTLACO was formed to go against ORTL?~~**

**~~A – No that is not at all true! The RTLACO was formed after five years and numerous good-faith attempts to address a few essential issues needed to insure Ohio maintains a unified voice within the pro-life community. Regrettably, under the current leadership at ORTL, it became abundantly obvious they had no intention of instituting even a few of these basic enhancements. We were left with no other choice but to chart a new course and embrace a strategy for victory and a governance model designed for the 21st century.  We are happy to work with any group that protects life.~~**

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**~~Q – How will we receive communications and action items from RTLACO?~~**

**~~A – Email would be our preferred method because of cost and expediency. If we don’t have your email address we will mail the notices to your member organization’s primary mailing address for official meeting notifications and other essential communications.~~**

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**~~Q – How is the RTLACO funded?~~**

**~~A – The same way all of our organizations are funded through individual, business, and in-kind donations, and to a much lesser degree, annual membership fees. Our membership fees for any organization is nominal.~~**

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**~~Q - Can a 501c3 organization be a member of RTLACO?~~**

**~~A - Yes, your membership is not a conflict for your 501c3 status.~~**

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