

Original article found online at:

<https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2019/02/28/last-nashville-abortion-clinic-suspends-services-new-one-opens-mount-juliet-planned-parenthood/3016454002/>

Last week there were no abortion clinics in the Nashville area. By next week, there will be two.

[Anita Wadhvani](#), Nashville Tennessean Published 3:33 p.m. CT Feb. 28, 2019 | Updated 4:39 p.m. CT Feb. 28, 2019

CONNECTTWEETLINKEDINCOMMENTEMAILMORE

Planned Parenthood sign *(Photo: Getty Images)*

Last year, the two remaining abortion clinics in Nashville suspended services, leaving women seeking abortions to drive hundreds of miles to clinics in Knoxville, Memphis or out of state.

On Friday, a new clinic that provides abortions and family planning services will begin operating in Mount Juliet — a location the non-profit organization carafem said they selected to address the [diminishing number of abortion providers in Tennessee](#).

Help power local journalism. [Become a digital subscriber.](#)

Next week, Planned Parenthood of Tennessee and North Mississippi will resume providing abortions at their north Nashville health center, which has continued to provide other healthcare services. The clinic [suspended abortions in December](#) 2018 to perform renovations and recruit new doctors. It will resume abortion services incrementally, said CEO Ashley Coffield.

The addition of two new abortion clinics in close proximity to the state's capitol comes as lawmaker weigh measure that would severely restrict abortion services.

One such measure, the "heartbeat bill" would criminalize abortions performed after a fetal heartbeat was detected in the early weeks of pregnancy. The "human life protection act" would trigger a ban on abortions should the Supreme Court overturn or amend the landmark Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion.

Heartbeat bill: [Bill that bans abortions in Tennessee after fetal heart beat sails through House committee](#)

The non-profit [carafem](#) selected the Nashville area for its fourth U.S. abortion clinic after seeing an increase in the number of women travelling to an Atlanta abortion clinic they operate. carafem also operates abortion clinics in Chicago and Washington, DC.

About 5 percent of the women seeking abortions at their Atlanta location come from the Nashville area, said Melissa Grant, carafem's chief operating officer.

"Instead of waiting for our clients to come to us, we decided to go to them," Grant said.

The latest news, at your fingertips. [Download our free app today.](#)



Buy Photo

The Women's Center, which has operated in the city since 1990 and was one of only two abortion clinics in Nashville, shut down on Saturday, Tuesday Aug. 14, 2018, in Nashville, Tenn. (Photo: Larry McCormack / The Tennessean)

Initially carafem's Mount Juliet clinic will provide only medication abortions for up to the first ten weeks of pregnancy. Grant said she hopes to add surgical abortion services in the future.

The Women's Center, an abortion clinic in Nashville, closed last August. Its owners said they hoped to open in a new location, but have not yet done so.

More than 8,600 abortions were performed in Tennessee in 2017, according to the Department of Health's most recent data.

Top headlines in your inbox.[Discover our slate of newsletters.](#)

Reach Anita Wadhvani at awadhvani@tennessean.com; 615-259-8092 or on Twitter @AnitaWadhvani.

CONNECTTWEETLINKEDINCOMMENTEMAIL