



## Utah's only abortion clinic outside Salt Lake is 'temporarily' closed. People are finding out the hard way.

The Logan location of Planned Parenthood served over 2,000 patients last year, according to the organization.





(Francisco Kjolseth | The Salt Lake Tribune) Protesters gather at the Utah Capitol for a “Bans Off Our Beehive” rally in support of abortion rights on Saturday, May 14, 2022. A Planned Parenthood clinic in Logan quietly closed its doors this spring, meaning Utah's only operating abortion clinics now are all in Salt Lake County.

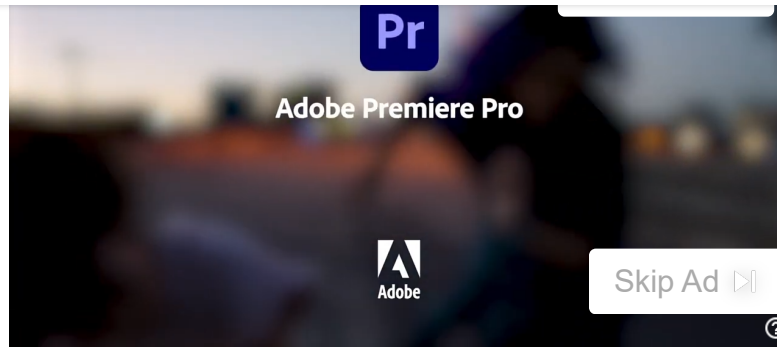
By Emily Anderson Stern | June 14, 2023, 6:00 a.m.

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Women in northern Utah looking for health care have limited options, but after Planned Parenthood quietly closed its doors in Logan this spring, patients are “(finding) out the hard way” that they have one less choice.

As Planned Parenthood Association of Utah fights a blocked near-ban on abortion and a recently passed abortion clinic ban in Utah courts, its only facility that offers abortions outside Salt Lake County “temporarily” closed in March, providing no explanation to patients.



The Logan location of Planned Parenthood is one of the few places in Cache Valley that offers affordable birth control and testing for sexually transmitted diseases.

“Our planned parenthood is ‘temporarily’ closed as I found out the hard way today when I desperately needed to get my depo shot,” wrote one patient in a Facebook post in May, referring to a form of birth control administered every three months.

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Tucked in an office building on Logan’s Main Street, where it’s a 20-minute walk from Utah State University, the clinic offers a variety of services mostly centered around reproductive care, like pregnancy testing, birth control (like the [Depo-Provera shot](#)) and emergency contraception. According to data provided to The Salt Lake Tribune by Planned Parenthood, the clinic served over 2,000 patients in 2022.

And although abortion procedures aren’t performed there, patients can go to the clinic to access medicated abortion. Only three other facilities in the Beehive State — all in Salt Lake City or surrounding municipalities — offer abortion pills.



(Jacob Scholl | The Salt Lake Tribune) A poster hanging on the Logan Planned Parenthood clinic door on June 12, 2023 that says the facility is "temporarily closed."

In addition to being located in a college town among tens of thousands of young adults, it's also a 20-minute drive from the border of Idaho — a state with [one of the most strict abortion bans in the country](#).

The exact date of the closure is unclear. A spokesperson for Utah's Planned Parenthood affiliate said it closed in late March, while another Facebook post from a patient noting its closure was made on March 18.

Planned Parenthood Association of Utah, meanwhile, has continued to advertise on social media that "Our doors are open ... from Logan to St. George." A spokesperson said the organization has notified patients of the closure on social media stories, which are typically only visible for 24 hours.

“Are you able to update me on what is happening or has happened with the PP in Logan?” the email read. “In a recent meeting, one of our partners said it had closed. Is this closure temporary or permanent? We need to update our testing jurisdictions and want to ensure we have accurate information.”

“Logan is temporarily closed, hope to re-open in July 2023. We will keep you posted,” a response read.

The estimated re-opening date, according to a Planned Parenthood spokesperson, has now been pushed to Aug. 1.

When reached by The Tribune, a coordinator with the Utah Abortion Fund — an organization that provides assistance to Utahns seeking access to abortion care, and was recently a joint beneficiary with Planned Parenthood of [an abortion access fundraiser](#) — was also not aware of the closure.



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The Logan clinic seemingly closed within days of [Gov. Spencer Cox signing an abortion clinic ban](#) into law on March 15. A district court judge [put that law on hold in May](#), as the abortion trigger ban it's attached to remains blocked while the Utah Supreme Court considers whether to keep the injunction.

Without the court's intervention, the clinic ban would have started taking effect on May 3, at which point [Planned Parenthood would have stopped](#) offering abortion services in Utah. Abortion remains legal in Utah up to 18 weeks.

A spokesperson for Planned Parenthood Association of Utah said the temporary closure came as a result of the Logan clinic “facing the same medical staffing issues that many other health care providers are experiencing.” A [website advertising job openings](#) for Planned Parenthood includes listings for a clinic manager and two clinical assistants.

The [clinic's website](#), which notes under its hours that it's “closed until further notice,” also says, “This health center does not have a provider available to offer abortion services.”

“Utah has long experienced health care–related workforce shortages that have reportedly been



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At his monthly PBS Utah news conference in March, Gov. Spencer Cox rebuffed questions from The Tribune about whether the abortion clinic ban would limit rural communities' access to affordable health care, especially reproductive health care, in the face of ongoing workforce shortages in the medical industry.

“We don't have staffing shortages in our hospitals right now,” he replied.

The Department of Health and Human Services, however, [has labeled Cache County](#) as an area that doesn't have enough health professionals to meet its population's needs. And Box Elder County to the west and Rich County to the east both have geography-based shortages, meaning, according to the state, there aren't health care professionals close enough to where many people are living in those counties.

Health care worker shortages in the Intermountain West are especially visible when it comes to reproductive care in states where abortion is restricted. In Idaho, for example, so many OB-GYNs have left after the state passed laws criminalizing abortion that [two hospitals have had to halt](#) labor and delivery services.

A Planned Parenthood spokesperson told The Tribune that it has hired “a new provider who is training currently at our other health center locations and will be providing full spectrum reproductive healthcare in Logan beginning in early August.”



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In Cache Valley, the temporary loss of an abortion clinic has likewise had impacts on other areas of care.

## Services.

More severely limited are the options for affordable birth control. Like the patient who posted about needing their birth control shot, another patient who took to Facebook about the closure in March first went to the Logan Planned Parenthood to have an IUD inserted.

When she moved from Puerto Rico to Utah for school, she said, she didn't have health insurance, and couldn't afford birth control without it.



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“Having that option for me was very important,” she told The Tribune, adding, “I went there and I think I barely paid, or I didn't pay at all.”

The Tribune is not publishing her name to protect the privacy of her health care decisions.

While closed, Planned Parenthood said it has been prioritizing appointments at other locations for people coming from Logan. The nearest clinic is just over an hour away in Ogden, although that clinic will move to a new building later this month.

“We continue to provide this high level of care during the temporary closure of the Logan health center, and we look forward to resuming health services at our Logan center in August,” the spokesperson wrote in a statement. “While we understand that this temporary closure impacts abortion and other reproductive healthcare access, we are committed to prioritizing Logan patients who wish to receive care at our other health centers.”



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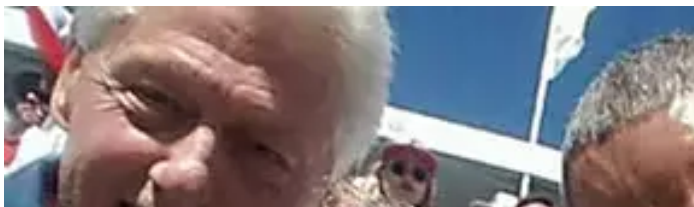
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