



The Santa Fe New Mexican



Santa Fe Planned Parenthood clinic 'temporarily closed' because of staffing shortage

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Jan. 15—The lights were off Wednesday afternoon inside Santa Fe's Planned Parenthood health center, located in a strip mall on St. Michael's Drive.

"We are closed today. Thank you for trusting us with your care," said a sign on the clinic's front door.

But the sign didn't refer to an isolated one-day closure. The center — which has long provided abortion medication, birth control, emergency contraception, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections and other forms of health care — has been "temporarily closed" since Dec. 30 and will remain that way "until further notice," according to Planned Parenthood's online clinic finder.

The interruption in services was brought on by a lack of staff as Planned Parenthood, too, weathers a shortage of health care providers across the state and nation, said Adrienne Mansanares, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains, which serves New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming and southern Nevada.

Mansanares is hopeful the local clinic, which has not offered procedural abortion, will be back up and running by the summer, though that depends on whether it can recruit qualified workers.

"We are absolutely committed to opening the doors back [up] in Santa Fe," she said in an interview Wednesday.

She acknowledged the closure comes at a fraught time for sexual and reproductive health care, particularly as New Mexico has become a destination for women seeking abortions in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision in summer 2022 that overturned the landmark 1973 ruling in *Roe v. Wade*.

"We've been reeling since the pandemic. Throughout COVID and then with the *Dobbs* decision just eradicating a national right to abortion care, we've absolutely been spinning in this reality," Mansanares said.

It takes between seven and nine people to staff one of Planned Parenthood's health centers, she said. That includes a health center manager, an assistant

Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains' online job postings currently include advertisements for a full-time health center manager, part-time assistant manager and full-time advanced practice clinician — a nurse practitioner or certified nurse-midwife — at the Santa Fe site.

"This temporary site closure is a direct symptom of the larger national health care crisis," Mansanares said. "It's our top priority right now to reopen the site, and so we're very focused on diligently hiring a new provider in particular."

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New staff will need about three months of training, Mansanares added, which means the clinic won't reopen for at least three to six months.

"We have had sites, sadly, that we had to remain dormant for as much as a year. ... It is all dependent on this very unpredictable provider shortage," she said.

The temporary closure of the Santa Fe clinic is "concerning," said Janeth Orozco, a spokesperson for the Albuquerque-based reproductive justice advocacy organization Faith Roots Reproductive Action.

"This clinic is the only resource many people have for abortion care and other reproductive health services, [especially] young people and people with limited resources," Orozco wrote in an email.

Mansanares said she shares concerns about the timing of the local center's closure and noted Santa Fe remains the health care hot spot for much of the northern half of the state.

"I'm a former patient and a current patient of Planned Parenthood myself,"
Mansanares said. "And to go to a location where you have a trusted person and

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