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**PLANNED PARENTHOOD**

# Staff shortages force 2 office closures

**By Cindy V. Culp**

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The local Planned Parenthood affiliate has closed two offices it operates outside of McLennan County. But the agency's director said they will re-open soon.

The offices, located in Marlin in Falls County and Groesbeck in Limestone County, stopped seeing patients last week, Planned Parenthood of Central Texas executive director Felicia Goodman said. The closures were not prompted by budget constraints, she said.

Instead, several employees have recently quit their jobs at the family planning agency, leaving it short-handed, Goodman said.

Because the satellite clinics are staffed by employees who travel from Waco to the sites one day a week, she decided to temporarily suspend operations until she can hire more workers.

She said she anticipates making the new hires soon and re-opening

the clinics in short order.

"We really would love to," Goodman said, noting the clinics serve as the sole source of reproductive health services for many women in those counties.

Planned Parenthood first opened sites in the two counties in the fall of 2007. Originally, the Limestone County site was in Mexia. It moved to neighboring Groesbeck about a year ago, Goodman said.

The two clinics offer contraception, annual well-woman exams, cancer screening and sexually transmitted disease testing.

They do not perform abortions.

Last year, the Marlin site provided 763 visits to 359 patients, Goodman said. The Groesbeck clinic provided 714 visits to 372 patients, she said.

The two clinics represent the only sites Planned Parenthood of Central Texas operates outside of McLennan County. It has two clinics in Waco, one of which performs abortions.

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