

# Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Labor & Delivery Wing Closure



## Frequently Asked Questions

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital (RRH), a TRICARE West Region network hospital in Ridgecrest, California, is suspending its labor and delivery services effective March 1, 2024. Health Net Federal Services, LLC (HNFS), the Defense Health Agency, RRH, and Branch Health Clinic China Lake are closely coordinating efforts to ensure all affected beneficiaries receive the health care they need and deserve—easily and with the least possible disruption.

### **Why is Ridgecrest Regional Hospital suspending labor and delivery operations?**

According to RRH's "[Notice of Elimination of Supplemental Service](#)" (posted Nov. 30, 2023), this change is a result of "significant financial and staffing challenges."

### **I'm in the middle of my pregnancy. What happens now?**

The RRH OB clinic will continue to offer care to those patients already enrolled until Feb. 29, 2024. RRH, HNFS, and Branch Health Clinic China Lake will be contacting existing patients to discuss care transfer options. If you have not yet been contacted or have questions or concerns:

- HNFS can assist identifying provider alternatives and coordinating care transfers. You can reach HNFS' case management team at 1-844-524-3578, Monday-Friday, 6 a.m.-8 p.m. PST. We will work closely with you, your new provider and RRH.
- To reach Branch Health Clinic China Lake's front desk, call (760) 939-8000.

### **What TRICARE facilities closes to Ridgecrest Regional Hospital offer labor and delivery services?**

- Antelope Valley Hospital, 1600 West Ave. J Lancaster, CA 93534.  
Phone: (661) 949-5000 – 85 miles / 1 hour 20 minute drive time
- Dignity Health (Bakersfield Memorial Hospital), 420 34th Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301.  
Phone: (661) 327-4647 – 113 miles / 1 hour 54 minute drive time
- Dignity Health (Mercy Hospital Bakersfield), 400 Old River Rd., Bakersfield, CA 93311.  
Phone: (661) 632-5000 – 115 miles / 1 hour 52 minute drive time

As a reminder, care must be rendered by TRICARE-authorized providers to be reimbursed under TRICARE.

### **What if I need emergent labor and delivery services?**

If you feel emergency care is needed, call 911 or go to the nearest military or civilian emergency room. RRH has confirmed its ability to handle emergency deliveries through its emergency department. Patients will be transported to an appropriate facility, once stable.

### **How do I locate OB/GYN providers in the area?**

You can search HNFS' Network Provider Directory at [www.tricare-west.com/go/directory](http://www.tricare-west.com/go/directory) to locate network providers. We also offer 24/7 provider locator services through our customer service line at 1-844-866-WEST (5378).

### **What if I want to move to be closer to family/other network facilities?**

Active duty family members may have the option to move. Please consult your personal administration office for possible options. Active duty service members require military orders to move. Should you relocate, be sure to update your address in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) at <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>. Learn more about the steps to follow when moving at [www.tricare.mil/moving](http://www.tricare.mil/moving).

### **Is the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital's labor and delivery closure a qualifying life event (if I want to change plans)?**

No. RRH's labor and delivery wing closure does not meet TRICARE specifications for a QLE (see [www.tricare.mil/LifeEvents](http://www.tricare.mil/LifeEvents)).

### **Will I be reimbursed for travel to providers for appointments or if I have to stay overnight for care?**

The Prime Travel Benefit only allows for reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses for medical travel over 100 miles. Non-active duty service members may be eligible for this benefit if enrolled in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Prime Remote for Active Duty Family Members. Reimbursement is managed at the unit level. Neither RRH nor HNFS manages reimbursement for medical travel. Learn more: <https://tricare.mil/Plans/HealthPlans/Prime/TravelReimb>

### **Will my spouse be reimbursed for travel if I need to stay overnight?**

Non-medical attendants may qualify for the Prime Travel Benefit for medical travel over 100 miles. Reimbursement is managed at the unit level. Neither RRH nor HNFS manages reimbursement for medical travel. Learn more: <https://tricare.mil/Plans/HealthPlans/Prime/TravelReimb>

### **Is Health Net Federal Services adding any additional providers or hospitals to their network?**

HNFS is working to identify the nearest hospitals with labor and delivery services, birthing centers, and OB providers to determine if they can be brought into the network. Please search our Network Provider Directory at [www.tricare-west.com/go/directory](http://www.tricare-west.com/go/directory) to locate network providers.