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Health Care

Hospital closure could support large number of job openings in Wichita region



Image: Wichita Business Journal

Rock Regional Hospital, pictured above on Jan. 7, 2026, closed its doors after filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy late last year.

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By [Audrey Jensen](#) – Senior Reporter, Wichita Business Journal
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Story Highlights

- Rock Regional Hospital in Derby closed Wednesday, displacing 200 employees.
- The hospital owed \$23 million in rent amid bankruptcy proceedings.
- Sedgwick County has over 2,600 health care job openings available.

The [sudden closure of Rock Regional Hospital](#) in Derby on Wednesday has left approximately 200 or more employees without work.

It shouldn't take long for those workers to find jobs, said Amanda Duncan, vice president and chief business development officer at the Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas.

"This one closure is unfortunate for the community, the Derby community and the individual workers, but overall the industry can absorb those workers and they will because they're skilled and available," Duncan said.



Amanda Duncan, Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas

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Rock Regional Hospital closed its doors a day after a federal judge said that the hospital's landlord could proceed with the eviction process of the hospital [amid a Chapter 11 bankruptcy](#) that was filed by the hospital in December. The [hospital owes more than \\$23 million](#) in rent.

Since 2018, the health-care industry has seen the highest number of job openings across the Wichita region because of the [growth of the sector](#) and events like the Covid-19 pandemic, according to research by the Workforce Alliance.

"Registered nurse is the No. 1 job opening repeatedly in our area," Duncan said.

Sedgwick County had more than 2,600 health care job postings in the past two months. In the nearby counties of Butler, Reno, Harvey and Cowley, another 785 jobs were posted during that timeframe, Workforce Alliance research found.

Facilities including hospitals and other types of health care offices are expected to benefit from the increase in available workers, similar to when the Wesley Rehabilitation Hospital at 13th and Tyler closed in 2022.

"There was 90 people impacted ... and they all had jobs right away," Duncan said.

Employees at Rock Regional Hospital may have trouble finding another job in Derby since there's only one other emergency room in the city, but workers are needed across the region. Some employees have already secured jobs with other hospitals.

"They won't have a problem finding a job just because of the high need that we have in our community and the number of available options either directly with hospitals or transferable to another type of health care provider," Duncan said.

Sedgwick County had more than 9,500 health care jobs as of Q4 of 2025, which is below the national average of 11,580 jobs for a similar sized region, according to Workforce Alliance research.

But job postings continue to increase with an average of 424 monthly postings in Sedgwick County compared to a national average of 378 for areas of this size. The most in-demand roles are for registered nurses, clinical nurse coordinators and patient care technicians.

Two of Wichita's biggest hospital networks, Wesley Healthcare and Ascension, comprise most of the job openings.

In a statement provided to the Business Journal, Wesley said it's always looking for skilled and compassionate health care professionals to join its team.

"We're saddened by the news of Rock Regional Hospital's closure, and our hearts go out to the employees impacted," the statement said.

A spokesperson for Via Christi said they are actively evaluating how to best support the region's evolving health care needs.

"We remain committed to caring for all who seek health care services and to providing safe, timely and compassionate care to all. Via Christi has open positions and encourages anyone seeking employment to visit our website and/or attend our various job fairs," the spokesperson said.

The Workforce Alliance provides rapid response services to impacted workers when layoffs are announced in Kansas. They initially reached out to Rock Regional Hospital in November amid rumors of the hospital closing and have reached out again to offer services since the closure was announced this week but haven't received any returned calls yet, Duncan said.