



## Rural Hospitals, Vital to Their Communities, Need Federal Support

### Background

- Nearly 2 million people live in California’s rural communities, which provide food, water, power, and recreation to the state, and their access to life-saving hospital care is at risk due to significant underpayment by the Medicare and Medicaid programs.
- Many small and rural hospitals in California are mirroring a troubling national trend — on average, they have seen their operating margin drop by a frightening 8 percentage points from 2019 to 2023. Between January 2013 and February 2020, more than 100 rural hospitals nationwide closed, including two in California — Corcoran District Hospital and Madera Community Hospital.
- When a rural hospital closes, those in poor health, seniors, and people experiencing poverty suffer the most (the national median poverty rate for rural communities with a hospital closure is 13%).

### Resources

- [Rural Infographic](#)