



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

*Washington Soldiers Home, 1301 Orting Kapowsin Hwy E • Orting, Washington 98360*

*Sewing Those Who Served*

December 31, 2020

Dear Soldiers Home Residents, Families and Family Representatives:

As we continue our weekly COVID-19 testing, we have identified 11 additional residents whom have been diagnosed with COVID-19 since our last message. The majority of our other residents that were first identified during our weekly testing, are well on their way to recovery and most have very slight to mild symptoms. Unfortunately, we do still have 6 residents in the hospital, 3 of which are expected to return this week and 3 that we are monitoring closely. Our thoughts are with each of these residents and their families as they battle this new enemy.

Weekly testing for residents will continue until fourteen days have passed without a new positive. Those residents that have tested positive will not be tested again until after ninety days of their positive test. In addition, we are in close contact with the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department and following guidance from the CDC, CMS and our State Department of Health to ensure we are taking every possible precaution. Residents are also being monitored for symptoms every four hours for at least the next fourteen days.

We continue working with the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department to determine next steps with regard to additional measures. We also are following guidance from CDC, CMS and our State Department of Health to ensure we are safeguarding our residents and staff.

Staff will continue to monitor whether they have any symptoms, including the presence of a fever. As part of our ongoing screening process, all staff are screened upon arrival at work each day. This process includes a series of questions around whether symptoms are present and a temperature check. In addition, staff are asked to report any symptoms that occur after coming to work.

The Soldiers Home, is following guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which requires regular testing of all long-term care facility staff. Currently the rate of positivity in Pierce County requires staff to be tested once each week. This may result in the identification of asymptomatic carriers, but is an important tool in defending against COVID-19.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

If you would prefer to receive these messages more quickly via email, please provide your email address to [romyr@dva.wa.gov](mailto:romyr@dva.wa.gov) or call 360-893-4501.

**VACCINE INFORMATION:**

The WDVA Veterans Homes Program has registered for the Operation Warp Speed Pharmacy Partnership Program. Through this program, the residents and staff will receive one of the vaccine series authorized for administration.

The tentative vaccine clinic date at the Washington Soldiers Home is January 7, 2021.

One of the requirements to receive the vaccine is a consent form. If you are a family member or representative that holds POA for your resident you should have received a consent form. If your resident is unable to self-consent, please fill in the name field, section B2, sign and return this to us ASAP! If you need a new copy, it can be found online at:

<https://www.dva.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Walgreens%20COVID-19%20LTFCF%20VAR%2012.08.2020.pdf>

In an effort to provide information as quickly and accurately as possible, we have developed a website to provide information to families and resident representatives,

<https://www.dva.wa.gov/covid>.

Sincerely



Robert Pence, Administrator