



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

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

Serving Those Who Served

December 17, 2020

Dear Soldiers Home Residents, Families and Representatives:

Today we are writing to provide another update on resident COVID-19 test results.

As a result of our resident proactive COVID-19 testing, four additional residents have been diagnosed with COVID-19. These residents are currently asymptomatic and have been placed in isolation in one area of the building. Staff are wearing appropriate PPE and using all appropriate precautions. All other resident tests have returned negative.

We are working closely with our partners at the Puget Sound VA Health Care System and will be transferring all five COVID-19 positive residents to their care

All residents at the Soldiers Home will be retested every 5-7 days until 14 days have passed without a new positive resident. Additional environmental cleaning continues to take place and we will conduct enhanced surveillance, including 4-hour symptom and temperature checks, for residents for the next 14 days.

All staff were tested on December 16 as part of the weekly staff testing and we are awaiting results from those lab tests.

We are 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.

We are asking our staff to pay close attention to 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.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Pence', with several overlapping strokes.

Robert Pence, Administrator