



## Department of Health

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Executive Deputy Commissioner

August 6, 2021

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update**

Dear Resident / Representative:

This letter is to provide you with an update on the status of the Veterans Home's efforts to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The safety and wellbeing of all residents is our top priority. The Infection Prevention and Control Committee continues to meet at least weekly to review new federal and state guidance and work closely with the county, regional, and state health department contacts. We are closely monitoring the developments of the Delta and other variants of the COVID-19 virus, and the Home may make additional changes to our infection prevention and control practices as necessary.

Everyone must continue to follow all infection prevention and control practices. This includes wearing a face mask at all times, staying physically distant (at least 6 feet) from others, performing hand hygiene regularly, and reporting any signs and symptoms that are out of the ordinary. While vaccinated residents may take their mask off with vaccinated visitors, we are encouraging everyone to try to keep masks on at all times. Masks must be worn when in public areas and especially when around other people. Please refer to our Visitor Fact Sheet for detailed information.

There were no new positive cases this past week. A total of forty-seven residents have tested positive since testing started. Sixty-seven staff have tested positive or presumptive positive since testing became readily available. Unvaccinated staff are now being tested weekly due to the increase in Chenango County's community positivity rate.

Please let your social worker know if you would like to talk with a nurse about the COVID-19 vaccine. COVID-19 vaccinations are available for residents and vaccine clinics are being offered at the Home every week. New admissions will be required to be vaccinated before they will be admitted.

We are still waiting for more details about the requirement for the Home's "patient-facing" staff to be vaccinated and will share this with you as soon as we have answers. All new employee hires will be required to be vaccinated in accordance with the State's guidelines.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact your Social Worker.

Stay well,

*Kurt D. Apthorpe*

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