



## Department of Health

**ANDREW M. CUOMO**  
Governor

**HOWARD A. ZUCKER, M.D., J.D.**  
Commissioner

**LISA J. PINO, M.A., J.D.**  
Executive Deputy Commissioner

May 14, 2021

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

Dear Resident / Representative:

This letter is to provide an update on the status of the Veterans Home's efforts to prevent the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). The safety and wellbeing of all residents is our top priority. The Infection Prevention and Control Committee continues to meet as necessary to review and act on guidance from the federal and state governments and work closely with health department contacts.

Currently, there are no COVID-19 positive residents in the facility. A total of ninety residents have tested positive since testing started. Resident molecular (PCR) laboratory testing continues and combined with rapid antigen testing we conduct at least two times weekly testing and more for targeted testing. Residents with symptoms will continue to be tested for the coronavirus.

We continue to test staff at least twice weekly in order to identify any new cases as soon as possible. One hundred forty-three staff have tested positive since testing became readily available.

In addition, in our ongoing fight against the Coronavirus, the vaccination program remains a priority for the Home. We are pleased to let you know that all residents have been vaccinated, and we continue our efforts to increase the vaccination rate amongst staff. This is in concert with the DOH and CDC's push to get as many people vaccinated as possible, and we are making daily progress.

The Veterans Home has been working on a visitor re-boot plan with collaboration from a dedicated group of staff. We want as many families as possible to visit and encourage all types of visitation. All visits will be conducted following CDC and State guidance. Please review the updated Visitor Fact Sheet and be aware that you will be expected to only go to and from the area that has been designated for your visit. Strict infection control practices must continue to be maintained during visits.

Visits must be scheduled in advance by contacting your Social Worker. Staff will manage visitation periods, 30 minutes per visit, to allow as many residents as possible an opportunity to see their loved ones. These time frames are expected to change as the weather improves.

Visitors are to check in at the Security desk and be screened (consisting of a temperature check and questions about symptoms, exposure, and recent travel). Two (2) visitors are allowed per resident visit, to allow for appropriate social distancing. Visitors are required to wear a face covering at all times while on the premises AND adhere to hand sanitizing and social distancing requirements of at least 6 feet apart.

Families are encouraged to communicate with your loved one via virtual methods such as FaceTime. Please call ahead and speak with the Social Work staff at (585) 345-2091. All visits must be confirmed by the staff prior to visitation. We thank you for your patience and understanding as we begin to more fully open for visitors.

Please reach out to us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
*Nicole M. Gallagher*

Nicole M. Gallagher, LNHA  
Administrator | Western NYS Veterans Home  
220 Richmond Avenue | Batavia, NY 14020