



STORM ISAIAS & COVID-19 Agency Update **August 14, 2020**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on Monday August 3rd to prepare for storm Isaias. As a result of the storm, many trees were uprooted and power lines downed causing loss of public utility power to the Campus and several buildings sustained roof and other damage. After operating on DVA's emergency generators and a supplemental generator from Eversource for a week, utility power was restored on Tuesday August 11th. The DVA is in the process of repairing roofs and addressing other urgent repairs, conducting detailed damage assessment and developing plans for long-term repairs and the strengthening of infrastructure.

The DVA Healthcare Center (HCC) has no COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients in its Isolation and Recovery Unit and there have been no new Veteran Patients testing positive for COVID-19 in more than three months. The DVA Residential Facility has no Veteran Residents in its Isolation Recovery Unit and no new Veteran Residents have tested positive for COVID-19 in ten weeks. The DVA Residential Facility completed a full one day testing of all Residential Veterans on July 21st with all Veterans testing negative for COVID-19. On July 9, 16, 23, 30, and on August 7, the DVA conducted COVID-19 testing of all direct care and front-line staff in the HCC, Residential Facility and other front-line employees resulting in all negatives for the virus. Testing was again conducted on August 13th, and we will report the results of those tests when available. The testing results to date demonstrate that the DVA COVID-19 mitigation protocols, including wearing masks, rigorous screening and ongoing testing are keeping our Veterans and staff safe. Testing of Veterans and staff will continue as part of our ongoing efforts to mitigate the potential spread of the virus which includes testing of all Veteran Residents on September 9th.

To date the DVA has tested two hundred and thirty-three Veteran Residents and Patients (most tested multiple times) for COVID-19 with twenty-five testing positive, most of these early in the pandemic. Of the twenty-five Veteran Residents and Patients who tested positive, twenty-two recovered from the virus. One Veteran Resident and two Veteran Patients passed away in late April and early May due to COVID-19 complications. Five staff members have tested positive for COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, with four recovering and returning to work three months ago and one who tested positive while out on sick leave three weeks ago has since tested negative and returned to work.

We continue adherence to the DVA COVID-19 Protocols and modifications thereto which are available, along with other important information, at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/DVA-COVID-19-Updates>.