



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
287 West Street  
Rocky Hill, CT 06067



*Thomas J. Saadi*  
*Commissioner*

**DVA COVID-19 Update: January 11, 2022**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) has no COVID-19 Veteran Patients and there are no Veteran Patients in protective isolation for COVID-19 monitoring purposes as a recent admission or recently returning from a community-based healthcare provider. As the DVA continues to experience COVID-19 cases among DVA staff, we maintain expanded regular COVID-19 testing and have added additional infectious disease control procedures to minimize the risk of COVID to Veteran Patients and staff. All masking, distancing/barriers and heightened hygienic and cleaning procedures remain in place, and increased COVID-19 testing will continue until further notice. The DVA is following the Governor's directives for mandatory COVID vaccine boosters for HCC staff with a compliance date of February 11, 2022. Any HCC staff member granted a religious or medical COVID vaccine exemption is required to provide a negative COVID PCR test each week, submit to additional testing at the HCC, and to wear elevated levels of PPE particularly when with Veteran Patients.

The DVA Residential Facility continues to experience an increase in COVID-19 positive Veteran Residents with ten Veteran Residents in the COVID-19 positive section of the Isolation Unit and one COVID positive Veteran Resident being treated in a community-based hospital. There are five Veteran Residents in self-isolation in their rooms due to contact tracing awaiting results of COVID testing. There are no Veteran Residents in the protective monitoring section of the Isolation Unit after several tested positive for COVID-19 and were transferred to the COVID-19 positive section. Veterans are placed in the COVID-19 protective monitoring section if they have COVID like symptoms and cannot be tested in a timely manner. However, this approach is minimal as the DVA now has rapid testing available in the Residential Facility. The DVA reinstated monthly testing for all Veteran Residents after many months of only testing unvaccinated Veteran Residents and Veteran Vocational Therapeutic Program participants. Testing of all Veteran Residents took place today with the results expected tomorrow. Regular on and off Campus recreational and therapeutic activities have been curtailed except for necessary shopping trips, and non-group activities presenting a low risk COVID-19 exposure.

Since the Pandemic began, the DVA has provided direct care for two hundred and seventy Veteran Residents and Veteran Patients at our Campus of which eighty-five tested or retested positive for COVID-19. Of those testing positive, sixty-eight recovered from the virus and ten remain in recovery at the DVA and one is in a community-based hospital. One Veteran Resident and three Veteran Patients passed away in 2020 due to COVID-19, and one Veteran Patient passed away January 2021 from COVID-19 complications. One Veteran Patient with COVID-19 passed away in December 2020 from a non-COVID-19 medical occurrence.

Of the one-hundred and sixteen DVA staff members contracting or re-contracting COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, ninety-seven have recovered and returned to work. Nineteen staff members, most of whom tested positive over the past week to ten days, are recovering at home and will return to work consistent with DVA clinical protocols. The DVA vaccine rate for staff is eighty-nine percent having received a first COVID vaccine dose and just over eighty percent being fully vaccinated with over thirty percent receiving a booster vaccine (fluctuations in vaccination rates are due to new staff pending vaccinations). On-Campus Vaccine clinics continue to provide COVID-19 and Flu vaccines to staff, Veteran Patients, Veteran Residents, with ninety-three percent of Veteran Patients vaccinated for the Flu.

The current DVA COVID-19 Mitigation Protocols, previous COVID-19 weekly updates and other information is available at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/DVA-COVID-19-Updates>.