



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
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*Thomas J. Saadi*  
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**DVA COVID-19 Update: December 30, 2020**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) had one new case of a COVID-19 positive Veteran Patient since Dec 23rd and there are eight COVID positive Veteran Patients in the Isolation and Recovery Unit, six Veteran Patients are temporarily at state COVID-19 Receiving Nursing Facilities (CRF) due to the HCC COVID positive Isolation Unit reaching capacity. Several Veteran Patients returned this week to the HCC from CRFs after recovering from COVID. There is one Veteran Patient in self-isolation for protective monitoring. Veterans in self-isolation for protective monitoring are either new admissions, patients who recently returned from acute care or contact tracers who tested negative for the virus and remain in the Isolation Unit until clinically cleared for release. The HCC continues weekly COVID-19 testing of all Veteran Patients and this week all Veteran Patients outside the Isolation Unit tested negative for the virus.

The DVA Residential Facility had two Veteran Residents test COVID-19 positive this week, and there are five Veteran Residents in the COVID-19 positive section of the Isolation Unit and one Veteran Resident in the Non-COVID section of the Isolation Unit for protective monitoring. Veterans in non-COVID Isolation/Quarantine are either new admissions, patients who recently returned from acute care or contact tracers who have tested negative for the virus and remain in the Isolation Unit until cleared by clinical staff for release to their regular rooms. The DVA continues regular testing of all Residential Veterans which in December we increased from once to twice per month with additional testing of Veteran Vocational Therapeutic Program participants. To date the DVA has tested two hundred and thirty-nine Veteran Residents and Patients (most multiple times) for COVID-19 with sixty-seven testing positive or retesting positive since March 2020. Of those testing positive, forty-four recovered (a first or second time) from the virus, eleven are currently in the Residential and HCC COVID-19 Isolation Units, five Veterans are at designated COVID-19 Receiving Nursing Facilities and two are in acute care. One Veteran Resident and two Veteran Patients passed away in the spring due to COVID-19. One Veteran Patient passed away two weeks ago from COVID-19 complications and one Veteran Patient with COVID-19 passed away last week from a non-COVID medical occurrence.

The DVA continues weekly COVID testing of direct care and front-line staff, which will continue until further notice. A total of forty-nine staff members tested positive for COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. Thirty-two DVA staff members have recovered and returned to work and seventeen are in various stages of home isolation or clinical care until cleared to return to work consistent with CDC and DPH guidelines.

Last week the DVA took a big step forward in battling COVID-19 with seventy of our DVA Healthcare and other direct care providers and fifty-six Veteran Patients receiving their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination. The staff and Veterans who received their first dose will receive their second dose on January 13<sup>th</sup> and we continue efforts to vaccinate the remaining DVA staff members. All Veteran Residents will receive their first vaccine dose on January 7<sup>th</sup> followed by the second dose three weeks later.

The DVA COVID-19 Protocols with most recent changes, DVA COVID-19 weekly updates and other important information is available at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/DVA-COVID-19-Updates>.