



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
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*Thomas J. Saadi*  
*Commissioner*

**DVA COVID-19 Update: February 5, 2021**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) has one COVID-19 positive Veteran Patient in the HCC Isolation Unit after a Veteran Patient recently recovered from COVID-19 and was released from the Isolation Unit. Three Veteran Patients are in self-isolation for monitoring as they recently returned from acute care or other community based healthcare facilities. These Veterans have tested negative for the virus but are in Self-Isolation out of an abundance of caution until clinically cleared for release. The HCC continues weekly testing of all Veteran Patients and both last week and this week all Veteran Patients, outside the Isolation Unit, tested negative for the virus.

The DVA Residential Facility had no new cases of COVID-19 Veteran Residents in more than a month and there are no Veteran Residents in either the COVID-19 positive section of the Isolation Unit or the protective monitoring Non-COVID section of the Isolation Unit after the remaining two Veteran Residents were cleared for release today. Veterans in non-COVID-19 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 testing of all Residential Veterans 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-nine testing positive or retesting positive since March 2020. Of those testing positive, sixty-two recovered from the virus. One Veteran is in the HCC Isolation and Recovery Unit, one Veteran Resident and two Veteran Patients passed away in the spring due to COVID-19 and two Veteran Patients passed away in December and January from COVID-19 complications. One Veteran Patient with COVID-19 passed away in December from a non-COVID-19 related medical occurrence.

The DVA will continue weekly COVID-19 testing of direct care and front-line staff until further notice. A total of fifty-seven staff members tested positive for COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. Fifty-four DVA staff members have recovered and returned to work and three are in various stages of home isolation or clinical care until cleared to return to work consistent with CDC and DPH guidelines.

The DVA continues vaccination clinics with nearly ninety percent of our Veteran Residents and Patients and one-hundred and twenty-eight of our DVA Healthcare and other direct care providers vaccinated to date. The DVA is also working with state agencies and community based non-profit healthcare providers to expand vaccination capacity through the training of vaccinators and the possibility of establishing a mass-vaccination site at the DVA Campus in Rocky Hill.

This week the DVA was proud to host a training mission of the CT National Guard's 14<sup>th</sup> Civil Support Team (CST) which conducted training at the DVA Campus. The 14<sup>th</sup> CST consists of Air and Army Guard personnel who provide vital public health and security support to civilian authorities in CT and the Region when chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high explosive threats may exist. Continued thanks to the CT National Guard for all they do in service to country and community and for the support of the DVA throughout the pandemic.

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