



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
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*Thomas J. Saadi*  
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**DVA COVID-19 Update: Sept. 25, 2021**

The DVA Healthcare Center (HCC) had two Veteran Patients test positive for COVID-19 three weeks ago, the first COVID-19 cases in nearly five and a half months in the HCC. Both Veterans have fully recovered in community based COVID Recovery Facilities and returned to the HCC and are doing well. There are no COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients in the HCC. Pursuant to DPH directives, the HCC's temporary suspension of indoor visitation remains in place due to an asymptomatic staff member testing positive for COVID-19 early this week. The person was immediately placed on home quarantine and based on contact tracing, there was little risk of exposure to Veterans or staff members. HCC visits will resume after we complete two weeks of testing of all Veterans and Staff with no COVID-19 cases. We continue to conduct additional rapid and PCR COVID-19 testing of all Veteran Patients, daily screenings, and weekly testing of all HCC Staff to identify persons with the virus as soon as possible. This week all Veteran Patients tested negative for COVID. All masking, distancing/barriers and heightened hygienic and cleaning procedures remain in place to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and we are in the process of implementing DPH's and the Governor's directives regarding mandatory vaccination of staff.

The DVA Residential Facility has not had a COVID-19 positive Veteran Resident in nearly six months and unvaccinated Veteran Residents and all Veteran Vocational Therapeutic Program (VVTP) participants tested negative for COVID-19 last week. We continue monthly testing of unvaccinated Veteran Residents, unless they are a VVTP participant, all of whom are tested notwithstanding vaccine status. There are no Veteran Residents in the COVID-19 positive section or the protective monitoring section of the Isolation Unit. We continue regular on and off Campus recreational and therapeutic activities for Veteran Residents including shopping, baseball games, fishing trips, theater trips, bowling, hiking and attending community based civic and Veteran Service Organization events.

Since the Pandemic began, the DVA has provided direct care for two hundred and fifty-five Veteran Residents and Veteran Patients at our Campus of whom seventy-three tested positive or retested positive for COVID-19 since March 2020. Of those testing positive, sixty-seven recovered from the virus. One Veteran Resident and two Veteran Patients passed away in the spring of 2020 due to COVID-19, and a Veteran Patient passed away in December 2020 and one in January 2021 from COVID-19 complications. One Veteran Patient with COVID-19 passed away in December 2020 from a non-COVID-19 related medical occurrence.

Of the seventy-four DVA staff members contracting (or re-contracting) COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, (one contracting the virus twice) seventy have recovered and returned to work. Two COVID positive HCC staff members are currently in home isolation after off Campus COVID exposure and are expected to be cleared to return to work soon. Despite the COVID-19 cases in DVA staff and Veterans, our mitigation protocols and response operations are highly effective and nearly eighty-six percent of staff have received their first COVID vaccine dose and more than seventy percent are fully vaccinated.

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>.