



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

DVA COVID-19 Update: March 19, 2021

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) has no COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients in the HCC Isolation Unit. Six Veteran Patients are in self-isolation for monitoring as they recently returned from acute care or other community-based healthcare facilities or were recently admitted to the HCC. These Veterans have tested negative for the virus but are in Self-Isolation out of an abundance of caution until clinically cleared for release. In the absence of any COVID-19 cases among Veterans or staff for nearly two months, the HCC no longer conducts weekly COVID-19 testing of all Veteran Patients, but instead tests individual Veterans and Veteran cohorts as clinically indicated.

The DVA Residential Facility had no new cases of COVID-19 Veteran Residents in more than two months, and there are no Veteran Residents in the COVID-19 positive section of the Isolation and Recovery Unit and no Veterans in the protective monitoring section of the Isolation Unit. The DVA adjusted testing of all Residential Veterans to once per month with additional testing of Veteran Vocational Therapeutic Program participants. Last week all Veteran Residents tested negative for the virus. To date the DVA has tested two hundred and forty-two 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-three recovered from the virus. 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.

A total of fifty-seven DVA staff members tested positive for COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. Fifty-six staff members have recovered and returned to work with only one remaining to recover and be cleared to return to work consistent with CDC and DPH guidelines. The DVA continues weekly COVID-19 testing of direct care and front-line staff, all of whom tested negative for the virus for a seventh consecutive week. This testing will continue until further notice. The DVA has vaccinated just over ninety-one percent of our Veteran Residents and Patients and approximately fifty-two percent of our DVA Healthcare and other direct care providers and front-line staff are vaccinated.

In accordance with the ongoing reopening of the state and with high vaccination rates and absence of COVID-19 cases on the DVA Campus we are issuing updated COVID-19 Mitigation Protocols, which include expanded visitation to the Campus and the reinstating of the DVA volunteer and internship programs. The DVA is also accepting applications for admission to our Healthcare Center and Residential Facility, for information visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/Residential-and-Healthcare-Programs>. We also have openings in our Veteran family housing program, for information visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/Patriots-Landing>.

The DVA staff, with the support of our Federal VA partners and other state agencies, continue the hard work of meeting and overcoming the challenges of this pandemic to keep Veterans and staff safe. 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>.