



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

DVA COVID-19 Update: March 26, 2021

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Healthcare Center (HCC) has no COVID-19 positive Veteran Patients in the HCC Isolation Unit. Four 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 has had no new cases of COVID-19 Veteran Residents in two and a half 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. Two weeks ago, all Veteran Residents tested negative for the virus and last week a cohort of more than thirty Veterans in the Vocational program tested negative for the virus. To date the DVA has tested two hundred and forty-three 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.

Of the fifty-seven DVA staff members testing positive for COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, fifty-six staff members have recovered and returned to work and one remains in recovery and will 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 ninety-two 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 issued updated COVID-19 Mitigation Protocols on March 22, 2021 which expand visitation to the Campus and reinstitute the DVA volunteer and internship programs. **The DVA is accepting applications for admission to our Healthcare Center which provides long-term skilled nursing and Respite care. We are also accepting applications to our Veteran Residential Program and Veteran family housing program.** For more information and to obtain applications for these programs please visit: [CT-DVA-Sgt-John-L-Levitow-Residential-Facility-and-Patriots-Landing-Accepting-Applications-for-Admis.pdf](#).

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>.