



## STATE OF WASHINGTON

### DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

*Washington Veterans Home • 1141 Beach Drive E • Port Orchard, Washington 98366 • (360) 895-4700*

May 6, 2020

Dear Washington Veterans Home Residents, Family or Representative,

We are writing today in our continued effort to keep you informed on what is happening at the Washington Veterans Home. Life has certainly changed for all of us, but the impact on our you and your loved one is most significant. We know this is hard and we greatly appreciate your patience and support in following the guidelines that keep our residents and staff members safe.

There is talk of easing restrictions for certain services and industries in Washington; however, it's very likely that restrictions will continue to be in place for long term care facilities even after the Stay Home, Stay Healthy order is lifted. The risk that this virus poses to our population is simply too great. We need to continue to ask for your cooperation on the no visitor policy

Our activities department is doing a wonderful job of creating opportunities for families to visit virtually. If you haven't taken advantage of this opportunity yet, please contact them at 360-895-4376 to set up a visit.

#### Resident and Staff Testing

As you know, we are proactively testing all of our residents and staff members. We know that many carriers of COVID-19, of all ages, have no symptoms but are able to spread the virus without knowing it. That is why we believe the proactive step of testing all residents and staff, even if they are not experiencing symptoms, is an important tool. Even after this testing is complete, we will continue to re-test any resident with COVID-19 symptoms.

Washington Veterans Home: We are happy to report that all 224 residents were tested and all tests have returned with negative results.

We will begin proactive staff testing the week of May 4 to ensure that we identify anyone who may be carrying the virus but doesn't have any symptoms of illness.

You can find updated testing information on our website at [www.dva.wa.gov/covid](http://www.dva.wa.gov/covid).

#### PPE Status

Our State Veterans Homes are receiving shipments of personal protective equipment from our local health departments as well as from the State Emergency Operations Center. If we have either residents or staff who are either experiencing symptoms or test positive for COVID-19, we use additional PPE to prevent the virus from spreading.

Making sure we have adequate supplies of these items is essential and our Homes are working closely with our Central Office to order and account for PPE in our facilities. Right now, we have adequate supplies and are able to order and receive supplies as they are used.

I want to thank the many community members and groups who have come forward to make masks, face shields, gowns and other items that can be reused. The generosity of our Veterans' community and community at large is absolutely amazing and we can't thank you enough!

#### Activities:

We're working hard to keep your loved one engaged and active! In addition to the virtual visit opportunities,

Washington Veterans Home: the activities department is always looking for creative activities like room to room bingo complete with bingo bucks and prizes, a specialty coffee cart that travels throughout the facility, and a movie cart. They've also created some socially distanced activities in lower activity room such as painting and art classes. And they are conducting virtual core building exercise class, which is a resident favorite! Beginning this week, activities will be working with the transportation staff to have scenic drives, that begin on campus and end on campus, for our most restless residents.

#### Community Donations:

I also want to thank the many community members and families who have stepped forward to share their talents and in some cases their resources to show our Homes Team how much they are appreciated. The donations of food, homemade masks, activities for residents, and many other items are so appreciated!

#### Personal note from George:

As most of you are aware, I stepped into the Administrator's role at Washington Veterans Home a few months back as an interim to give the WDVA sufficient time to interview and find a candidate who was best qualified to carry on the role in of overseeing and directing the care of our veterans. I am happy to announce that a seasoned and extremely qualified individual has been selected and has stepped into the role of administrator effective May 1<sup>st</sup>. William McElya, a resident of the Port Orchard community and a 9 year veteran of the United States Army, will be providing the leadership at the WVH campus moving forward.

WASHINGTON STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**VETERANS  
AFFAIRS**  
"Serving Those Who Served"

## One Team. One Mission.

GRATITUDE, BY THE NUMBERS

**632** VIRTUAL VISITS - FACILITATED FOR OUR RESIDENTS & THEIR LOVED ONES

OVER **1,275** MEALS DONATED TO OUR HOMES TEAM

- 120 COOKIES
- 66 PIZZAS
- 160 CUPCAKES
- 120 DONUTS

**6,322** ITEMS DONATED

Essential Supplies Collected:

- 6,192 - Cloth Masks
- 130 - Face Shields
- \$1,625 - Donated Funds

**#1**

## 812

 DEDICATED HOMES TEAM MEMBERS -  
ENSURING THE BEST CARE FOR WASHINGTON STATE VETERANS & THEIR FAMILIES

**SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED**

For our COVID-19 updates visit  
[www.dva.wa.gov/covid](http://www.dva.wa.gov/covid)  
Questions? Send to [communications@dva.wa.gov](mailto:communications@dva.wa.gov)

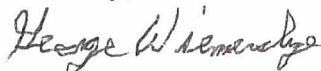


I would like to express that it has been my pleasure stepping into the WDVA organization here at Port Orchard and working with the central management in Olympia. I have rarely seen a group of individuals from our top leadership to our front-line staff so intently focused on supporting each other during this current pandemic and all of the uncertainty surrounding it. I have also been very impressed with the families and the resident's cooperation as circumstances changed sometimes on a daily basis. Because of everyone's willingness to do their part to keep our residents safe, we can all be very proud of the fact that so far, this mean little monster has been kept away from our doorstep. Our purpose as always is to reduce the chances of transmission and infection as much as in humanly possible. It has been an honor working with all of you.

We will continue to provide regular updates here and on our website at: [www.dva.wa.gov/covid](http://www.dva.wa.gov/covid). If you have questions, please contact us at 360-895-4700 with any questions or concerns you may have

We are here to serve your loved one and you as best we can through these challenging times.

Sincerely,



George Wiemerslage, Administrator  
Washington Veterans Home  
Department of Veterans Affairs