



STATE OF WASHINGTON

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Walla Walla Veterans Home**

**92 Wainwright Drive • Walla Walla, Washington 99362 • 509-394-6800**

April 22, 2020

Dear Walla Walla Veterans Home Residents, Families and Representatives:

Late last night, April 21, 2020, we received confirmation that one of our employees at the Walla Walla Veterans Home was diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee is now self-isolated at home.

We realize this news is concerning and we want to reassure residents, staff and family members that we are working closely with the Walla Walla Department of Community Health and following guidance from CDC, CMS and our State Department of Health to ensure we are taking every possible precaution. We will stay in contact with the employee to ensure they get the care they need.

In consultation with the Jonathan M. Wainwright VA Medical Center, the Walla Walla Veterans Home was scheduled to begin testing all residents today as a proactive step. The positive test of one of our staff reinforces the need to conduct testing as we work to safeguard the Veterans and Families in our care.

In addition to proactively testing all residents, the Walla Walla Veterans Home will conduct enhanced surveillance, including 4-hour symptom and temperature checks, for all residents for the next 14 days. Staff will also wear procedure masks when providing resident care. Staff have been wearing cloth masks at all times in the Veterans Home since April 15 in an effort to prevent an asymptomatic carrier from inadvertently sharing the virus.

Additional environmental cleaning took place in areas that the staff member worked, and all residents and staff who had close or direct contact have been notified.

We are asking our staff to pay close attention to whether they have any symptoms, including the presence of a temperature. As part of our ongoing screening process, all staff are screened upon arrival at work each day. This process includes a series of questions around whether symptoms are present and a temperature check. In addition, staff will take their temperature at least twice a day and are also asked to report any symptoms that occur after coming to work.

We know that this news is difficult to hear and want to reassure residents, families and staff that we are doing everything within our power to keep them safe and healthy.

In an effort to provide information as quickly and accurately as possible, we have developed a website to provide information to families and resident representatives, <https://www.dva.wa.gov/covid> and a phone line where general information on resident testing and results will be recorded each day at noon, 509-394-6826.

Daniel Knapp  
Administrator