

# Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs News Release



**September 10, 2020**

**PORT ORCHARD** – The Washington State Veterans Homes are working hard to combat COVID-19. Today at our Veterans Home in Port Orchard, we learned that a resident has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Our care team is monitoring the resident closely and they are isolated in their room.

We realize this news is concerning and we want to reassure residents, staff and family members that we are working closely with the Kitsap Health District and following guidance from CDC, CMS and our State Department of Health to ensure we are following all infection control procedures.

“The Veterans and Families we serve mean so much to us and news that this virus has entered our building is upsetting to all of us,” said Lourdes E. “Alfie” Alvarado-Ramos director of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. “We are taking every possible precaution and will continue proactive measures to keep the virus from spreading in the Home. Our veterans and their family members are in extremely capable hands.”

Additional environmental cleaning took place throughout the building and we are in the process of notifying and testing all residents and staff based on guidance from the Kitsap Health District.

The Veterans Home will conduct enhanced surveillance, including 4-hour symptom and temperature checks, for all residents for the next 14 days. Staff will wear appropriate personal protective equipment while caring for the COVID-19 positive resident and will continue wearing procedure masks throughout the nursing care building.

We are asking our staff to continue 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.

The Veterans Home, is following guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service, which requires regular testing of all long-term care facility staff, this testing was scheduled to begin today and will continue until all staff are tested. This may result in the identification of asymptomatic carriers. If this occurs, these notifications will be sent and we will follow all of our regular procedures including contact tracing, deep cleaning and sanitizing.

The Veterans Home team is working around the clock and we appreciate their commitment and dedication to ensure our residents are cared for with dignity and compassion.

All residents, families and staff are being notified and we will continue to provide updated information online at: [www.dva.wa.gov/covid](http://www.dva.wa.gov/covid) and through a message, which is recorded at noon each day, at 360-895-4696. Media inquiries should be addressed to [communications@dva.wa.gov](mailto:communications@dva.wa.gov).

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