



Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

Tony Evers, Governor | Mary M. Kolar, Secretary

May 15, 2020

Dear Members and Families:

While the Safer at Home Order is no longer in effect, we must still do our part to help curb the spread of this virus in order to protect our members, our staff, and our community. This means we will be taking the next step in our already rigorous screening protocols. Free testing and diagnostics are being provided to all of Wisconsin's 373 nursing homes to test all nursing home residents and staff, with the goal of testing more than 10,000 residents and staff per week during the month of May.

These tests are important. By more aggressively testing people for COVID-19, we can then properly isolate people who test positive and quarantine their close contacts. We will effectively be boxing in the virus.

Starting Sunday, May 17th, we will begin testing all staff and members for the virus. As we've mentioned before, any staff that has had any symptoms previously has been tested and required to stay home until they receive their test results. Our members and staff have had zero positive tests to date.

Testing for our Home will be conducted by facility nursing staff. The nasal swab test will be used. This testing method is less intrusive than other methods available. To protect confidentiality, test results will only be shared with each member OR their responsible party/POA-HC. Positive test results will be reported to local public health officials as required for contact tracing investigation.

Testing may need to be conducted periodically until further notice. You will receive notice of future testing sessions as they are scheduled.

Limiting who enters our facilities, temperature screening those who do, and strongly enforcing our infectious disease control procedures are the best tools we have to keeping the virus at bay. Now we have another tool – testing – that will help us to control the spread of the disease and collectively help keep our community healthy so that we do not bring this terrible virus into our Home.

Finally, we continue to follow the guidance of the Centers of Disease Control for Long-term Care Facilities and Nursing Homes to restrict all visitation to facilities except for certain compassionate care reasons, such as end-of-life situations. The ease of spread in a long-term care setting and the severity of illness that occurs in residents with COVID-19 requires our continued diligence in order to prevent the kind of outbreaks that other nursing facilities have experienced. If you have any questions, please reach out to us.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Mark Wilson and Megan Corcoran in black ink.

Mark Wilson
Commandant

Megan Corcoran
Executive Director