



Margaret D. LaBrecque  
Commandant

**New Hampshire Veterans Home**  
139 Winter Street  
Tilton, NH 03276



Telephone: (603) 527-4400  
Fax: (603) 286-4242

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Dear Residents and Families –

As you have most likely heard, there has been a significant COVID increase in our state and nation. The NH Department of Health and Human Services has shared that the prevailing variant has been Delta, not the Omicron variant that has captured the interest of the media. While staff continue to mask, perform hand hygiene and maintain social distancing, the time has come for increased levels of protection for our veterans.

**New Limited Visitation Protocol:**

Effective immediately, due to the community spread, visitors and veterans will need to wear masks during visits, regardless of their vaccine status. This is a change of the policy that required only unvaccinated individuals to wear masks. Visitors without a medical-grade mask will be provided one. For safety, proper use of masks is imperative; masks need to **cover both the nose and mouth** at all times.

Other visiting information remains the same. It is important to follow the guidelines that were implemented for health and safety best practices:

- *Go directly to the resident you are scheduled to visit without engaging in conversation with others along the way.* If you are unsure of the visiting location, our personnel is happy to guide you.
- *Remain in the room designated for the visit.* If assistance is needed during the visit, call bells are available to signal for assistance.

Visits continue to be scheduled by Recreational Therapy at [visits@nhvh.nh.gov](mailto:visits@nhvh.nh.gov) or (603) 527-4816.

**Staff Testing:**


Also due to the amount of COVID spread in the state, the NH Veterans Home (NHVH) continues to test all staff weekly. During last week's testing on January 4<sup>th</sup>, nine staff tested positive. These staff members are on home isolation. Some of these staff were on quarantine for exposure to positive cases in their household, some were asymptomatic with unknown exposure, and some experienced symptoms after community exposure. Weekly testing will continue for all staff until further notice. In the interim, we thank our staff for continuing to work diligently to keep our veterans safe; no residents have tested positive.

**Resident Handbook Reminder:**

We all enjoy new items from time to time. Whether it be for a birthday, other special occasion, or 'just because', it is important that **all items** be brought to the nurses' station prior to being given to your loved one. Items sometimes need to be properly labeled or cataloged. Other items need to be reviewed for contents to ensure no ill effects will be caused due to ingredients or the item itself. Whatever the reason, we will take care of it for you. For more detailed information, feel free to refer to the NHVH Resident Handbook.

Thank you for your commitment to the health and safety of our veterans, staff and visitors.

Sincerely,

  
Margaret D. LaBrecque  
Commandant