



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

ILLINOIS VETERANS' HOME AT LASALLE  
1015 O'CONNOR AVENUE, LA SALLE, IL 61301  
TELEPHONE: 815-223-0303 \* FAX: 815-223-5815

JB PRITZKER  
GOVERNOR

ANGELA MEHLBRECH  
ADMINISTRATOR

LINDA CHAPA LAVIA  
DIRECTOR

November 17, 2020

To residents, families or responsible parties, and staff of the Illinois Veterans Home at LaSalle:

We continue to be committed to communicating with you in a responsible and transparent manner about COVID-19 (coronavirus). Since our last COVID-19 update there have been three (3) additional cases at our home. Since the beginning of the crisis we have had a total of 96 positive residents and 93 positive employees. (I incorrectly reported 90 total staff yesterday and the correct number is 91.) Unfortunately, we have lost an additional four (4) Veterans bringing the total number of Veterans with COVID-19 who have passed away to twenty-one (21). We are following the latest medical guidance and are working with state, federal and local health officials to ensure the continued care for all of our residents and testing and protection of anyone potentially exposed.

As always, our top priority is the health and safety of our Veteran heroes and the devoted staff who care for them. Throughout this pandemic we have been following recommendations from state and local health officials to safeguard everyone at the facility and despite the outbreak we continue to do health screenings of staff and residents, maintain social distancing practices, wear face coverings, use gloves and gowns when indicated, and perform thorough cleaning and disinfection. We are grateful to our team for remaining highly vigilant for signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and for responding swiftly, appropriately, and professionally to any potential cases.

We understand this news can be distressing, which is why we encourage you to contact your loved ones for mutual support of one another. If your loved one has been affected by the virus, we want to offer you the opportunity to visit in person. Please understand this is a risk to your health and safety and though we will provide all the appropriate PPE, we cannot guarantee you will not contract the virus.

We would like to further clarify our process for "compassionate care visits" as defined in the IDPH guidelines. Residents who are positive for COVID-19 run the risk of a rapid change in condition. We do not want to risk that the family can't say good-bye. These are singular visits, which have been conducted in the same manner for compassionate care visits throughout the pandemic – 1 person at a time. The visitor arrives at the vestibule in front of the building (between the two double doors) and buzzes for security. The visitor then completes a visitor monitoring form and security takes their temperature. All PPE is available there for the visitor and a nurse assists the visitor in putting it on correctly. The visitor is escorted by that nurse directly to their loved one and back out at the end of the visit. The visitor is not allowed anywhere else in the building.

We continue to offer virtual visits and you can schedule those by calling the Activity Department. We appreciate your understanding and support for any precautions we may need to take. We promise to keep you informed as we do everything possible to bring our home through this outbreak. Our military veterans and our wonderful home staff are strong and resilient people. With your continued support, we will get through this together.

Sincerely,  
Angela Mehlbrech  
Administrator  
815-410-8396  
[Angela.mehlbrech@illinois.gov](mailto:Angela.mehlbrech@illinois.gov)