



State of Idaho
DIVISION OF VETERANS SERVICES
“Caring for America’s Heroes”



BRAD LITTLE
Governor

MARV HAGEDORN
Chief Administrator

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March 9, 2020

Dear Veterans, Residents, Family Members, Volunteers, Contractors and Visitors of our State Veterans Homes:

We know some of you may be concerned about the spread of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) being reported in the media and how it may impact us here at the Idaho Division of Veterans Services and our State Veterans Homes. Ensuring residents are cared for in a safe and healthy environment is always our greatest concern.

Although at this time, we don't have any confirmed COVID-19 cases in Idaho, we are taking all necessary precautions and have obtained and implemented guidance received from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Last week, we also received guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and we are in the process of implementing this guidance to help reduce the potential for the virus to enter our State Veterans Homes. In order to assist in battling COVID-19, or any other virus, we also need your help. Below are some examples of how you can help our veterans and their families during your visit to the Homes, as well as practices that can be used to help prevent the spread throughout the community.

1. **Illness or sickness.** We kindly request that you do not visit the Veterans Home if you have any symptoms of respiratory illness. Those symptoms include cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, and/or shortness of breath.
2. **Practice proper hand washing hygiene.** We kindly ask that all family, volunteers, contractors and visitors clean their hands before and after interaction with residents and their environment with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
3. **Coughing or Sneezing.** We kindly ask that you please cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and put your used tissue in a waste basket. IF you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

We have also posted signs on our entryway doors to notify visitors of the symptoms of COVID-19 and request that they not enter the building if they are experiencing the symptoms described above.

The Home is also carefully following the recommendations of the CDC and CMS on using basic contact precautions to prevent the spread, including following strict handwashing procedures, and in many circumstances wearing gowns and gloves when interacting with residents who are sick. We are further closely monitoring and staying up to date with the CDC recommendations as they are announced and published, as well as keeping in close contact with our local and state health departments and other state executive agencies and following their guidance. Additionally, we are following CMS guidance by implementing a screening process for those who visit our facilities, and for the ultimate safety of our residents we may need to limit or restrict access if the below criteria are met.

The screening consists of three simple questions that will assist us in limiting transmission of the COVID-19 virus to our veterans. These questions include:

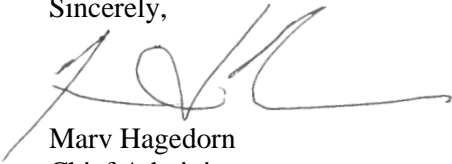
1. Have you had international travel within the last 14 days to restricted countries?
2. Have you had any signs or symptoms of a respiratory infections, such as a fever, cough, and sore throat?
3. Have you had contact with someone with or under investigation for COVID-19?

We understand that connecting with your loved ones is incredibly important and, should you be ill, there are a variety of other ways you might consider connecting with them. These may include telephone, email, text and/or video conferencing.

We will notify you if any of our nursing facilities have confirmed cases diagnosed with COVID-19.

As always, we appreciate you strong commitment to our veterans and their families, to our communities, and to our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marv Hagedorn', written over a thin horizontal line.

Marv Hagedorn
Chief Administrator
Idaho Division of Veterans Services