



December 2, 2020

To All Staff:

**Status Update**

Each week we will provide you with updated information on COVID-testing at all of our campuses.

Testing Tracker: Summary of Employees & Residents Diagnostic Testing								
Employees	To date (since pandemic start)				New Suspected Cases			
	Employees tested	Tests Pending	Employees Positive	Employees Negative	Employees tested	Tests Pending	Employees Positive	Employees Negative
Chase	14	0	1	13	0	0	0	0
GSFH	15	0	3	11 and 1 inconclusive	0	0	0	0
GSVE	18	0	3	15	0	0	0	0
Residents	To date (since pandemic start)				New Suspected Cases			
Residents tested	Tests Pending	Residents Positive	Residents Negative	Residents tested	Tests Pending	Residents Positive	Residents Negative	
Chase	14	0	0	14	0	0	0	
GSFH	61	0	8	53	3	0	3	
GSVE	35	0	1	34	1	0	1	
Tested as of 11/24/20				11/25/20-12/1/20				
Please note some testing was purely precautionary as the individual was asymptomatic. Ex: fall led to ER visit and tested.								

Please note the chart above is for testing conducted for cause only. At this time, it does not include the mass staff weekly testing discussed below, resident exposure testing, or staff testing done as part of any pre-op procedures.

**NYS DOH Mandatory Testing for all Staff: Results of week of 11/25/20-12/1/20:**

**Mass Testing**

	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	121	0	121	0
GSVE	142	1 positive who was not on campus during infectious period and 3 repeat positives	138	0
Chase	101	1	99	1

***Staff Testing 11/25/20-12/1/20***

In the last round of staff testing, we had the following positive results:

*GSFH:* No new positive staff results

*GSVE:* No new positive staff results

*Chase:*

11/29/20

- One staff member in our Nursing Department tested positive for COVID-19. The employee is symptomatic and will Self-Isolate for 14 days. Two staff members were in close contact and will follow all department of health instructions regarding self-quarantine. No residents were identified as having close contact but as a precautionary measure due to the nature of the employee's work both units have been placed on droplet precautions.

***Resident Testing 11/25-12/1***

*GSFH:* No new positive resident tests.

*Chase:* No new positive resident tests.

*GSVE*

11/28/20

- We received a report from the local health department that a resident in Independent Living had tested positive for COVID-19. As this was an IL resident, the local health department conducted contact tracing, although we did provide assistance in terms of staff members who had been in this person's unit. Based on this tracing, no other residents and no staff members were in close contact.

GSVE has also seen the loss of four of our SNF residents who had previously tested positive for COVID during the past week. All of our staff are mourning these losses, and our thoughts and prayers are with the residents' family and friends.

There have not been any newly identified positive residents in SNF.

In the last round of staff testing, we had the following positive results:

**NYS DOH Mandatory Testing for all Staff (Reminder)**

Per the DOH guidelines for mandatory testing, the week runs from **Wednesday-Tuesday**. We are now in the week of December 2-8. A new week will start on December 9, which will run to December 9-15. When scheduling or planning your appointment to be

tested, please keep the week dates in mind in order to be in compliance with the Executive Order. The Executive Order was extending through December 3, 2020. We will keep you posted on any updates.

The testing times for each campus will be as follows:

<u>GSFH</u>		<u>GSVE</u>		<u>Chase</u>	
Tuesday	2-4pm	Monday	2-4pm	Monday	5-8am & 1-4pm
Wednesday	7-9am	Tuesday	2-4pm	Tuesday	5-8am & 1-4pm
Thursday	2-4pm	Wednesday	2-4pm	Wednesday	5-8am & 1-4pm
Friday	7-9am	Friday	2-4pm		

**If you miss the weekly test, you cannot work and will not receive any pay, including benefit time, until you are tested. This includes using benefit time that was pre-approved for any time you are non-compliant prior to being tested.** Please understand we are taking this strong stance not to be punitive but because NYS DOH will be monitoring our compliance with the weekly testing requirements, and any non-compliance among our employees can result in the facility itself being penalized. We have eliminated the earlier requirement that we receive a negative test result prior to return in recognition that testing results are now taking an extended time. **Please help us meet this NYS DOH requirement by planning ahead and taking responsibility to be in compliance even if you are scheduled to be out for some portion of the testing week.** Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

### **NYS Quarantine Travel Restrictions**

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced new guidelines allowing out-of-state travelers to New York to "test out" of the mandatory 14-day quarantine. Travelers from states (Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Connecticut) that are contiguous with New York will continue to be exempt from the travel advisory. Essential workers will continue to be exempt as well. The new protocol is effective Wednesday, November 4.

**Per NYS, if you travel to a prohibited area, you cannot return without providing the results of a negative test conducted within 24 hours of your return to NYS.** GSC has determined the period while you await your results is not eligible to quarantine pay and you may not use benefit time. If you do decide to travel to a restricted zone, you should carefully consider the availability of testing upon your return, and the average length of time people are waiting for their results - 5+ days unless you have access to the rapid response testing which is not widely available.

In addition, if you do become ill, NYS COVID pay is not available per NYS guidelines because you have traveled to a high risk area as defined by NYS.

**We are highly recommending for the health and welfare of our residents and staff members that you adhere to the travel restrictions.** We understand this may mean canceling vacations or missing important life events, and know how difficult these decisions can be. We all have a responsibility to our fellow New Yorkers, our co-workers, and our residents, to do our part to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

For people outside the nursing home guidelines the following applies:

New guidelines allowing out-of-state travelers to New York to "test out" of the mandatory 14-day quarantine. Travelers from states that are contiguous with New York will continue to be exempt from the travel advisory; however, covered travelers must continue to fill out the [Traveler Health Form](#).

For any traveler to New York State from out of state, exempting the contiguous states, the new guidelines for travelers to test-out of the mandatory 14-day quarantine are below:

For travelers who were in another state for more than 24 hours:

- Travelers must obtain a test within three days of departure from that state.
- The traveler must, upon arrival in New York, quarantine for three days.
- On day 4 of their quarantine, the traveler must obtain seek another COVID test. If both tests come back negative, the traveler may exit quarantine early upon receipt of the second negative diagnostic test.

For travelers who were in another state for less than 24 hours:

- The traveler does not need a test prior to their departure from the other state, and does not need to quarantine upon arrival in New York State.
- However, the traveler must fill out the traveler information form upon entry into New York State, and take a COVID diagnostic test 4 days after their arrival in New York.

Local health departments will validate tests, if necessary, and if a test comes back positive, will issue isolation orders and initiate contact tracing. The local health department must make contact with the state the traveler came from, to ensure contact tracing proceeds there as well. All travelers must continue to fill out the traveler information form upon arrival into New York State to contribute to New York State's robust contact tracing program.

## **Vaccination**

We continue to monitor the news on approvals for COVID-19 and the federal recommendations for prioritization.

We were encouraged to learn the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) formally announced yesterday that the first available and approved COVID-19 vaccine doses will be allocated to health care and frontline workers, as well as residents of long-term care facilities. This functions more as a recommendation rather than a mandate, but will help states plan how to distribute the first round of vaccine doses.

Vaccine developers Moderna, Pfizer, and AstraZeneca have all reported positive efficacy data in November, with the Moderna and Pfizer in the process of applying their vaccine candidate for the FDA's Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is expected to approve the emergency use of two shots later in December.

We will provide more information into what will happen in NYS in terms of vaccinations as it emerges.

## **Screening Question Reminder.....**

COVID is a respiratory virus that presents with a wide range of symptoms. Fever is common, but not always present when an individual is infected with COVID. Diarrhea can also be a symptom which many people might not associate with COVID. GSC has implemented a symptom screening process to help identify any staff that should remain out of work. Please, be mindful of the symptoms we screen for when reporting to work. If you have developed symptoms, which are NEW and/or UNUSUAL for you, WITH or WITHOUT a fever, please notify your supervisor before reporting to work.

**In addition, it is very important that you are truthful when answering the screening questions. Failure to answer them truthfully could cause a co-worker, or resident to become ill with COVID, and if the misrepresentation is confirmed, will result in termination.**



We really appreciate your on-going commitment to Good Shepherd-thanks for all you do!

Sincerely,

Linda Parke  
Director of Human Resources