



November 12, 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	12	0	0	12	1	1	0	0
GSFH	14	0	3	10 and 1 inconclusive	0	0	0	0
GSVE	17	0	2	15	1	0	1	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	Residents Negative
Chase	13	0	0	13	1	1	0	0
GSFH	42	0	8	34	4	0	0	4
GSVE	30	0	0	30	1	0	1	0
Tested as of 11/4/20					11/5/20-11/11/20			
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 11/05/20-11/11/20:**

**Mass Testing**

Mass Employee Testing				
	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	164	3 (all repeats)	161	0
GSVE	162	4 new & 1 repeat	157	0
Chase	106	0	106	0

**Staff Testing 11/5/20-11/11/20**

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

*GSFH*: No new positive staff results

*GSVE*:

11/5/20

- A staff member who works at Good Shepherd Village at Endwell in the housekeeping department *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee is asymptomatic and will self-isolate for 14 days. One staff member was in close contact, they will follow all Department of Health instructions regarding quarantine.

11/6/20

- Two staff members who work at Good Shepherd Village at Endwell *tested positive for COVID-19*. One employee works in housekeeping and is symptomatic and one employee works in nursing and is asymptomatic, both will self-isolate for 14 days. One staff member was identified as being in close contact, they will follow all Department of Health instructions regarding quarantine. There are no residents who are considered close contacts.

11/8/20

- One staff member who works at Good Shepherd Village at Endwell in the nursing department *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee is asymptomatic and will self-isolate at home for 14 days. No staff or residents were identified as close contacts. All staff is utilizing full PPE for contact/droplet precautions including the use of N95 respirator masks.

11/10/20

- One staff member who works at Good Shepherd Village at Endwell in the dietary department *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee has mild symptoms and will self-isolate at home for 14 days. Two staff members were in close contact and will self-isolate for 14 days. One of the close contacts has mild symptoms and the other is asymptomatic.

*Chase:* No new positive staff results.

#### ***Resident Testing 11/5/20-11/11/20***

*GSFH:* No new positive resident tests.

*Chase:* No new positive resident tests.

*GSVE:*

11/6/20

- Four of our residents on our Skilled Nursing Unit tested *positive for COVID-19*. At the time, one resident had mild symptoms and the other three are asymptomatic. We created an isolation unit in the Leisure Room and the four residents were re-located to that area. No staff or residents were in close contact.

11/11/20

- A Skilled Nursing resident tested positive for COVID-19. The resident is symptomatic.
- 3 more SNF residents tested positive as part of mass testing 11/11 but they are all asymptomatic.
- No staff or residents were identified as close contacts of any of these residents. All staff are utilizing full PPE for contact/droplet precautions including the use of N95 respirator masks.

We will continue with our mass testing of residents and staff per the CMS testing guidance.

We continue to have a daily monitoring system to monitor all residents for signs/symptoms of COVID-19, as well as our daily screening for all staff.

#### **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 November 11-17. A new week will start on November 18, which will run to November 18-24. 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		

Please note, due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the testing day for GSFH on Thursday November 26, will be moved to Monday, November 30 from 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.

### Staff Testing

Another change in NYS policy impacts staff testing. The new requirement imposes a twice-weekly testing requirement for all nursing home personnel in red, orange, and yellow micro-cluster zones. The requirement takes effect on Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> for facilities that are already in those zones and seven days from the designation of a zone going forward. It must continue until the facility is no longer in a micro-cluster zone. There is also a federal requirement to test personnel twice weekly when the *county* positivity rate exceeds 10 percent – thus, even if your facility is not in a micro-cluster, you may need to test personnel twice weekly if your county positivity rate exceeds 10 percent.

Good Shepherd Fairview Home is the only GSC facility in a yellow zone, and will fully comply with this requirement as long as necessary.

### Mask

At GSVE, all employees must wear *surgical* masks while at work. The surgical masks offer increased filtering protections of microorganisms as opposed to cloth masks.

### Social Distancing Outside of Work

Please be conscious that your choices outside of work as well as while you on-site can impact our residents and your coworkers. We urge you to protect yourself against COVID as you go about your daily lives, and to use common sense.

Furthermore, if you choose to socialize with coworkers outside of work, you should be wearing a mask and observing social distancing. If you or a coworker tests positive for COVID, we are required to do contact tracing. If there has been a close contact, the local Department of Health assesses the risk. In some cases, the close contact may be allowed to work but must self-quarantine when not a work. In other cases, such as people sharing a ride or a meal, the Department of Health has determined the risk is heightened, and the close contact would also be prohibited from working. This can have a devastating impact on our staffing and therefore our operations. For example, at the moment, GSVE is not able to serve dinner in the Village Center because of the number of Market Place Servers who have been furloughed. Please remember your actions have consequences.

### 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, Massachusetts, and Vermont) 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.

### **Cuomo Announced New Restrictions**

Since COVID cases continue to rise in NY, Governor Cuomo has initiated new restrictions for places with liquor licenses to cease operations at 10pm, which go into effect on Friday, November 13. Restaurants will be allowed to offer curbside food-only pickup after 10pm. Also, gyms in NY will have to close at 10pm every day. New limits on the size of gatherings in homes are being implemented as well. Private residential parties now will not be permitted to have more than 10 people, which is down from the current limit of 50.



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

Sincerely,

Linda Parke  
Director of Human Resources