November 25, 2020

To All Staff:

SCHEDULE CHANGE

Effective today, we will be sending out our weekly communications on Wednesday rather than Thursday. This will allow the RNs who collect some of the testing data to align this collection with other reporting deadlines. For this week, we will be reporting on a short week- Thursday 11/19-end of day Tuesday 11/24. Future reporting periods will be Wednesday-Tuesday as opposed to Thursday-Wednesday.

Status Update

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

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	13	0	0	13	1	0	1	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	0
GSFH	56	0	8	48	5	0	0	5
GSVE	34	0	1	33	1	0	0	1
Tested as of 11/18/20					11/19/20-11/24/20			

Please note the chart above is for testing conducted <u>for cause only</u>. 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 11/1/20-11/24/20:

Mass Testing

	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	215	0	215	0
GSVE	106	4 repeat and 1 repeat deemed new case	100	1
Chase	74	0	74	0

Staff Testing 11/19/20-11/24/20

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

GSFH: No new positive staff results

GSVE:

11/21/20

- An employee in the dietary department tested positive for COVID-19.   This is a repeat positive test. The staff member is asymptomatic and will self-isolate for 14 days. One staff member was identified as being in close contact and will self-isolate for 14 days.

Chase:

11/20/20

- One administrative staff member tested positive for COVID-19 after becoming symptomatic and being tested for cause. No residents were close contact, and one staff member was identified as being a close contact and will self- quarantine for 14 days.

Resident Testing 11/19/20-11/24/20

GSFH: No new positive resident tests.

Chase: No new positive resident tests.

GSVE: No new positive resident tests.

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 25-December 1. A new week will start on December 2, which will run to December 2-8. 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:

GSFH		GSVE		Chase	
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 2-4 pm.

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 me. 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.

If you have questions during the upcoming open enrollment period starting 11/23 and running through 12/4, please contact your HR department.

Screening Question

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.

LeadingAge Award of Honor:

Katie Smith Sloan, the President and CEO of Leading Age released the following last week:

> "Every year, LeadingAge bestows the Award of Honor on one member who has provided nationally significant, transformative leadership in aging services. This person shows vision, mission, compassion, and courage every day of the year.
>
> I have the privilege to announce this year's Award of Honor recipient: every member of LeadingAge. Every CNA, housekeeper, service coordinator, dining server, cook, nurse, therapist, dishwasher, social worker, and every administrator, manager, and receptionist. **Everyone**. Your dedication keeps people thriving, families together, and communities intact.
>
> Thank you for everything you have done, and continue to do, in the face of incredible adversity. You truly deserve this award. Congratulations!
>
> [Take a moment to watch this video](https://leadingage.org/2020-leadingage-award-honor) and share with your team.   [Note: the video can be found at https://leadingage.org/2020-leadingage-award-honor]
>
>
> With gratitude,
> Katie"

Congratulations and a heartfelt "Thank you!" to all of you who make such a difference in the lives of our residents.

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

Sincerely,

Linda Parke
Director of Human Resources