

From: [Leno, Lonna \(DVA\)](#)
Subject: WWVH FAMILY LETTER - IMPORTANT MESSAGE *PLEASE READ*
Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 5:11:02 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
Importance: High

Dear Walla Walla Veterans Home Residents, Families and Representatives:

I'm going to get right to the point with this letter. We have recently had a few instances of family members who have chosen not to follow the nursing home visitation guidelines as directed by the Governor, CMS and other regulators. A few visitors have broken rules at the outdoor visiting booths, some have knocked on the house doors which are sometimes opened by residents who believe they are helping, and a few have completely disregarded the screening process prior to a compassionate care visit. I assure you that when we learn of these instances, we investigate what happened to determine what went wrong. Ultimately, individuals, who choose to disregard the safety guidelines, may not be able to schedule future visits. We simply cannot allow one family's decision to not follow the rules to adversely impact all of the other families with loved-ones here.

Having said that, we also know that 99% of our families are absolutely abiding by the rules and doing their part to keep this awful disease out of our building. And for that we say thank you! Because of our combined efforts, we are currently the only nursing home in the Walla Walla Valley that doesn't have and hasn't had a resident diagnosed with COVID-19. We are extremely fortunate in this area and thank you and our staff members for following the rules set out by CMS, the Walla Walla County Department of Community Health, and other regulators.

We don't like the visitor restrictions any more than you do. We know the impact it is having on our residents. However, we're watching some of the nursing homes in our community struggle with full-scale COVID-19 outbreaks where residents are literally fighting for their lives. When faced with that reality, tightening the access restrictions to the Veterans Home is the right thing to do at this point in time.

As you know, covid-19 case numbers and hospitalizations are soaring in Walla Walla County. Until we, as a community, are able to get things under control, our Residents are at risk. We are doing everything we can from a staff testing, staff screening, and visitor restriction standpoint, but when we have visitors who unnecessarily put our residents and staff at risk, we know we must take different steps.

We will be sending a separate document with guidelines for window visits, outdoor visits, essential support, end-of-life and compassionate care visits. For now, I want to highlight a few things we're changing or enhancing.

- All drop offs are completely no contact. If the doorbell is not answered, please call 509-

394-6800 and listen to the voicemail phone tree to be connected with someone in your loved one's house.

- Any family member coming on to campus for a visit must make an appointment ahead of time. This includes essential support, end-of-life and approved, pre-arranged compassionate care visits.
- All visitors must check-in and be screened in the Administration Building (when outdoor visits are resumed, screening for outdoor visits may be done near the visiting booth).
- All visitors must sign a statement at the screening area acknowledging the visiting guidelines.
- Staff members will monitor all visits to ensure social distancing is maintained and masks remain in place.

Please share this letter with other members of your family who have visited or are interested in scheduling visits. (If you have a family member that you would like us to send this letter to directly, please provide us with their contact information.) For now, our outdoor cube visits continue to be suspended. For situations including end of life or essential support persons, please contact your care team to discuss the safety, appropriateness, and process of scheduling a visit.

Thank you for your help and support as we work together to keep COVID-19 out of the Walla Walla Veterans Home.

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WWVH Website