



For Immediate Release
May 3, 2020

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Statement from the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) on staff members testing positive for Coronavirus

On April 30, 2020, the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) was informed that two staff members tested positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19):

- An employee at the AFRH campus in Gulfport, Mississippi, who works in a healthcare administration role that does not provide services to AFRH residents, was last on campus on April 24 and is recovering at home. Contact tracing determined that the staff member interacted with several other staff, including senior leaders. All AFRH personnel have been maintaining social distancing and face coverings during workplace interactions. None are symptomatic. At this time there is no evidence that the individual interacted with residents.
- A food service contractor at the AFRH campus in Washington, D.C., was last on campus on April 22 and is recovering at home. The contractor works evening shifts in a role that has essentially no contact with residents. Contact tracing determined that the contractor interacted with several other food service personnel. No other food service workers have symptoms; all have their temperature checked before working and wear a mask while on duty.

No AFRH resident has tested positive for COVID-19.

Although these are the first confirmed COVID-19 cases involving staff, AFRH remains vigilant in limiting exposure of the virus in the Home. Those who have a positive test, in addition to self-isolating for the duration of their illness, will be required to have two negative tests prior to returning to the campus. Employees who have a negative initial test will remain off-campus in self-isolation for 14 days.

AFRH response to COVID-19

AFRH initiated its COVID-19 response in January 2020 by encouraging residents and staff to use frequent handwashing and hand sanitizers prior to entering common areas such as the dining room, wellness center, fitness center, and other facilities.

In March 2020 the Home established social distancing guidelines, mandated the use of hand sanitizer at all building entrances and throughout the community, and limited visitors.

As communities around AFRH experienced new cases of COVID-19, the Home instituted a number of precautionary measures. Since March 30, all residents have remained on campus and are strictly limiting contact with others. Only residents and AFRH personnel will have access to the campus and facilities that house residents.

Facial coverings are required for everyone, and staff in upper levels of care receive daily temperature checks and health screenings. Communal dining in food service facilities has been suspended, consistent with CDC guidance for retirement and nursing homes. Meals are now carry-out only for residents in independent living, while residents in upper levels of care are having their meals delivered.

In order to fully protect all residents and staff, AFRH is unable to welcome visitors until further notice. This includes family and friends of residents.

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The Armed Forces Retirement Home serves eligible veterans (those who spent the majority of their active-duty time in the enlisted ranks, or as warrant officers) from all branches of the Armed Forces. Residents have earned their right to live at AFRH through serving more than 20 years on active duty, service-connected disability, war theater service, or as a woman who served before 1948.

The Home is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities and The Joint Commission.

For more information: <https://www.afrh.gov/>