



TO Residents, Families and Staff Members
FROM Frances Lachowicz *Frances Lachowicz*
DATE December 1, 2020
SUBJ 12-Hour Notice: Five Staff Members Test Positive for COVID-19

On Monday, we conducted COVID-19 tests for 69 staff members and 56 residents in our assisted living, memory care, rehab and skilled nursing care settings. Because we are testing employees twice a week, we used rapid tests for some due to the extended turnaround time that our lab and others are taking to provide results for PCR tests. Both tests are reliable.

Mercy Circle now has the equipment to conduct rapid tests, which provide results in approximately 15 minutes but take longer to administer. Because all residents in our healthcare settings tested negative for the virus last week, we continued to use the standard PCR test for them.

For the 34 employees who took the rapid test, 29 received negative outcomes. Five staff members, who are asymptomatic and received positive results, immediately went home to recuperate from the virus including

- Three nurse managers, who typically do not have direct contact with residents
- One CNA, who was working in our assisted living wing
- One member of our administrative team

All five employees will return to work in accordance with CDC guidelines. Please comply with all HIPAA regulations designed to protect their privacy. We have completed contact tracing and asked a limited number of assisted living residents to temporarily stay in their apartments and limit their contact with other residents.

The other 35 staff members and all 56 residents were tested using the PCR method. We will share information about any positive test outcomes if and when we receive them. We also moved testing for independent living residents to today, instead of its previously announced time on Wednesday.

In anticipation of a surge of new cases predicted by the experts, Governor JB Pritzker indicated on Monday afternoon that he plans to extend Illinois' stay-at-home advisory.

Please be confident that our frontline nurses and CNAs are on duty to provide care to residents. Call me at 773-253-3627 with your concerns, suggestions or questions.