



TO Residents, Families and Staff Members
FROM Frances Lachowicz 
DATE January 1, 2022
SUBJ One Resident, One Staff Member Have Tested Positive for COVID-19

Our report today about two more people who live or work here having positive outcomes for COVID-19 is a testament to our community members' commitment to being cautious and collaborative about following Mercy Circle's safety protocols.

Even with all the steps we diligently take, I have two new cases to report based on the results of rapid tests conducted earlier today. Both individuals are isolating in their home while they recuperate from the virus.

- One independent living resident, who is asymptomatic, took a rapid test today because this person was away and only returned here this morning.
- One CNA, who most recently cared for skilled nursing care residents on Thursday, December 30, tested negative for COVID-19 on Friday before starting this employee's second shift; however, due to the onset of symptoms associated with the virus our nursing assistant went home. Today, our staff member returned for a second rapid test which has a positive outcome.

Our staff member only will return to Mercy Circle in compliance with CDC, CMS and IDPH regulations. Please follow HIPAA guidelines to respect the privacy of these individuals newly diagnosed with COVID-19, as well as other residents and staff members, who are recovering from the virus.

Current surge in new cases should inform your plans

As you know, the Illinois Department of Public Health recently suspended reporting new cases on Saturdays and Sundays. Today, however, it published the fact that 128,246 Illinois citizens contracted COVID-19 during this past week, with one day representing the largest-ever surge in the number of cases in a single day since the pandemic began.

This afternoon and tomorrow, Mother Nature is providing yet another reason to

- Stay home if you are not feeling well or have been with someone with the virus
- Postpone in-person visits and calling 773-253-3600 or sending a request to LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org for assistance with arranging virtual visits

In fact, it's a good idea to stay home this weekend unless there is a need to travel. From inside the comfort of home, enjoy the beauty of the snowfall this weekend. ▼

We also ask residents to

- Stay in the wing where you live and consider the risks before deciding to visit someone who lives in another area here
- Participate in activities where gatherings are set-up for smaller groups in rooms set for social distancing

In addition, we ask skilled nursing care residents to watch Mass on Channel 8 instead of going to the Chapel.

At this time, our leadership team has

- Restricted admissions to skilled nursing care only for current residents if and when the need arises
- Planned staff members' assignments with the goal of employees consistently working in only one area of our community

We will continue to conduct rapid tests for everyone on Tuesdays and Fridays as the quickest way to identify new occurrences of the virus. When someone receives a positive result, we also administer a PCR test and send it to our lab for confirmation.

Please call me at 773-253-3627 to discuss your suggestions and to ask your questions.