

Statement Regarding Holyoke Soldiers' Home

Several weeks ago Superintendent Bennett Walsh issued a statement refuting the falsehoods that he kept state officials in the dark and that no one knew what was going on in Holyoke. Since that statement, I have waited for state officials to acknowledge that he did indeed request the National Guard and that he fully informed state officials of the circumstances that required him to do so. Because they have remained silent, I want to set the record straight.

Events leading up to the request for the National Guard

On March 21, Superintendent Walsh was notified that a veteran had tested positive for Covid-19. Later that night he notified the Secretary of Veteran Services and the next day he filed a Critical Incident Report with both the Department of Veteran Services (DVS) and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EHS). (#1) Both DPH and the Holyoke Board of Health were also notified. (#2)

In that same Critical Incident Report Walsh also notified state officials that 5 other veterans were symptomatic and that their samples had been obtained and sent for testing.

On March 22 and 23 staff observed that other veterans were symptomatic. As a result, samples were collected and sent for testing for more than 20 veterans. At that time, state officials were only requesting reports on confirmed, not suspected, cases. However, state officials were notified that samples had been sent for testing on the veterans believed to have Covid-19. (#3)

On March 25 Walsh was notified that a staff member had tested positive for Covid-19. He notified DVS and filed a Critical Incident Report with both DVS and EHS. (#4) Later that same day, a veteran suspected of having Covid-19, died. State officials were notified orally of the death and that a sample had been collected and sent for testing.

As concerns grew about confirmed and suspected Covid-19 the size of the staff available to deal with the crisis began to shrink as on one day alone 40 staff members had called out. The medical staff at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home reached out to EHS and the Department of Public Health for advice on how to handle the situation. In the dementia unit, the veterans were not able to care for themselves. They did not have private rooms, or private baths. There were 3 or 4 veterans sharing a room. They discussed the conditions at the Soldiers' Home and what steps HSH was taking to address them with state officials. State officials assured them that the steps they were taking to address the crisis were appropriate and consistent with guidance. (#5)

On March 26 staff observed that 7 additional veterans appeared symptomatic. Samples were obtained and sent for testing.

On March 27 the test results for 10 veterans were received. 7 veterans had tested positive for Covid-19 and 3 had tested negative. Test results for 18 veterans were still pending. Walsh texted these

results to DVS. (#6) At about 11:59 am a Covid-19 Case Tracker report was filed. (# 7) This report was updated later at about 3:41 pm. (# 8)

Walsh knew that the veterans needed additional help. He reached out to determine the proper protocol to get medical assistance from the National Guard. At 1:03 pm he received an email from EHS indicating that they knew "Holyoke needs as much help as it can get now" and that they were asking how to request assistance from the National Guard. (#9) It was determined that the proper procedure was to make a formal request to the Secretary of Veteran Services. From there the request would go to the command center, MEMA and then the National Guard. Walsh made the formal request at 1:24 pm. (#10) In response, at 1:43 pm, he received an email from DVS stating that "we are exploring all options at this time". (#11)

State officials knew in advance that Walsh was requesting assistance from the National Guard and that they knew immediately after that he had done so. Yet, no one has come forward to confirm this fact publicly:

The situation continued to deteriorate. Walsh updated EHS and DVS at 4:11 pm that there were 2 additional veterans who had tested positive for Covid-19. And, also that a veteran who had tested positive for Covid-19 had died. (# 12) Out of concern for his staff, Walsh requested grief counselors be provided to help them deal with the crisis.

As of March 27th, state officials were aware that:

- Superintendent Walsh had requested National Guard medical assistance
- The virus had infected persons in multiple locations at HSH
- 10 persons (9 veterans and 1 staff) had tested positive for the coronavirus
- 15 test results were pending
- The veterans were vulnerable because of their age, health and living conditions
- 25 % of the work force was not reporting for work
- HSH was forced to cohort veterans because of the conditions and staff shortages
- 2 veterans had died, 1 death was confirmed Covid-19 and the other was suspected

By March 27th a crisis, caused by the coronavirus, had erupted at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home.

Sometime in the afternoon Walsh was informed that his request for National Guard assistance was turned down. He was never contacted by the command center so we do not know if they ever received the request or if they did what attention they gave to it. We do know that the National Guard was available to respond 2 days later.

Events after Requesting the National Guard

On Saturday at 11:38 am another Case Tracker report was filed. (#13) The number of positives was now 10 veterans positive and 2 staff members positive.

On Sunday morning at 11:21 am Walsh texted DVS indicating that there were now 10 veterans and 2 staff members who were positive and that there were 2 confirmed Covid-19 deaths. (#14) Several veterans had died over the weekend and on Sunday morning Walsh did not yet know how many of the deaths were Covid-19 related. Some test results were still pending. Several of the veterans who died were in the hospice program and confirmation that their deaths were related to Covid-19 was necessary.

At 2:48 pm the Covid-19 Case Tracker report was filed indicating there were now a total of 15 veterans positive and 4 staff members positive. (#15)

At 4:18 pm Walsh set up a conference call to be held with the Board of Trustees on Monday at 5 pm to update the Board on the situation. (#16)

At 4:31 pm legal counsel reported to Walsh that there he had determined that there were now 4 deaths confirmed positive for Covid-19 and 4 deaths with test results still pending. Walsh was scheduled to provide this information to DVS at the Monday morning conference call. (#17) Legal counsel indicated that the information regarding the deaths was passed orally to state officials.

Restrictions on public release of information

Walsh was prohibited from releasing information to the public or making any public comments without prior approval of state officials.

On November 25, 2019 the "Pledge to Patriots" organization provided a check to the Soldiers' Home for \$43,000. This money was the proceeds from the 2019 Holyoke motorcycle run. The check presentation ceremony took place in the canteen at the Soldiers' Home so that the veterans could participate and the Pledge to Patriots organization could directly thank the veterans. When Walsh was asked to provide some comments on behalf of the Soldiers' home he thanked the Pledge to Patriots organization for their generosity and said it was a great day at the Soldiers' home.

However, because Walsh had not received prior approval for his impromptu remarks from state officials a letter of reprimand was placed in his file by the Secretary of DVS.

As the Covid-19 situation started to unfold Walsh was instructed not to make public comments without approval. On March 28, 2020 HSH received a press inquiry from Channel 22. (#18) This inquiry raised several issues, including the fact that there was a death at the Soldiers' home. Walsh was instructed not to respond. (#19) The response that Channel 22 received, however, was incomplete and misleading. It did not confirm that there was a Covid-19 related death. This failure to inform the public that a veteran had died because of Covid-19 was the action of state officials, not Superintendent Walsh.

On Sunday night Walsh a received a call from the Mayor in Holyoke. He was a public official and the Soldiers' Home had been communicating regularly with the Board of Health. Walsh informed him of the information he had regarding the situation. (The very opposite of trying to keep people in the dark as alleged by state officials). Walsh did this without prior approval. State officials were livid that Walsh had talked to local officials about the situation at the Soldiers' Home without their prior approval. It triggered an unusually heated response from state officials that resulted in his suspension.

I believe this is why he was suspended and placed on leave.

Attorney William M. Bennett

Springfield, Massachusetts

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

1. Critical Incident Report
2. Email 3/22/20
3. Text re pending tests
4. Critical Incident Report
5. Emails 3/25/20
6. Text 3/27/20
7. Case Tracker Report
8. Updated Case Tracker Report
9. Email 3/27/20
10. Request for National Guard
11. Email 3/27/20
12. Email 3/27/20
13. Case Tracker Report
14. Text 3/29/20
15. Case Tracker Report
16. Board of Trustee email
17. Email 3/29/20
18. Channel 22 press inquiry
19. Email 3/28/20

10/11

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From: **Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov**
Subject: **Critical Incident Report_Holyoke_03.22.2020_Draft 2.docx**
Date: **Mar 22, 2020 at 9:54:26 AM**
To: **Francisco Urena** francisco.urena@mass.gov, **Catherine G Mick**
Catherine.G.Mick@MassMail.State.MA.US, **Brooke Karanovich**
Brooke.karanovich2@MassMail.State.MA.US, **Colleen Arons**
Colleen.M.Arons@MassMail.State.MA.US, **Daniel Tsai**
Daniel.Tsai@MassMail.State.MA.US
Cc: **Paul J Moran** Paul.Moran@MassMail.State.MA.US, **Anthony Preston**
Anthony.Preston@massmail.state.ma.us, **Debra Foley**
Debra.Foley@MassMail.State.MA.US, **Mark Yankopoulos**
Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov

Good morning Mr Secretary, undersecretary Mick, Dan , Brooke, & Colleen

Attached is the HLY critical incident report for covid -19 test results.

Please let us know if you have any additional RFI's and we'll update as necessary.

Thanks for all the support.

Sincerely,

Bennett Walsh

Superintendent Soldiers home in Holyoke

[REDACTED]



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Critical Incident Report (updated 11/2019)

The Critical Incident Report is intended as an early warning for the Executive Office of Health and Human Services of any major event involving a staff member or consumer of EOHHS services that may warrant attention or action by the Secretary and the Governor, as well as to provide information to The Child Advocate pursuant to Chapter 176 of the Acts of 2008.

- The form should be completed by a senior staff person (e.g., Commissioner, Deputy or Assistant Commissioner, Chief of Staff) as soon as an event is known.
- Send the form to EOHHS Secretary Sudders, Undersecretary Mick, Chief of Staff Darcy, Assistant Secretary Arons, and Brooke Karanovich.
 - If the incident involves a child (as defined by your agency), also send the form to Maria Mossaides and Christine Palladino-Downs at the Office of the Child Advocate.
 - If the incident involves a child's death, also send the form to Paola Ferrer, DCF Chief of Staff.
 - If the incident involves serious issues with an employee, also send the form to EOHHS General Counsel Sharon Boyle and HR Officer Catherine Starr
- Incidents to be reported include fatalities, near fatalities, serious bodily injuries, imminent risk, serious employee misconduct, and serious threats of harm to EOHHS personnel and/or facilities.
- Notice to the Secretary should not preclude taking appropriate action immediately to address an incident.

ANSWER EACH ITEM BELOW:

1. Date of Report: 03/22/2020

2. Reporting Agency: Soldiers' Home Holyoke

3. Name, title, phone number of person filing report: Bennett W. Walsh, Superintendent,
413-552-4700

4. Does the report pertain to a child (as defined by your agency)? No

If Yes:

- Is the child receiving services from EOHHS agency/agencies?
- Is the child in the state's custody?
- How old is the child?

5. Is the agency already conducting an investigation? Yes

6. Is a law enforcement agency already conducting an investigation? No

7. Please describe incident in detail noting place, date, and time of incident to the extent known. If the incident involves an EOHHS client, please provide a brief client history noting the last known agency/client contact, key staff relationships (caseworker, supervisor), case status when the incident occurred, any action taken as a result of the incident, and proposed next steps:

On March 16, 2020, we tested a long-term care veteran who had been exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. On March 21, 2020 at approximately 2115, we received notification that the test was positive for COVID-19.

The veteran who tested positive has been placed in isolation.

Five other veterans in the same ward who were exhibiting symptoms have been tested. We expect to have the results by the end of the week. In the meantime, those veterans have been placed in one room to try to prevent the spread of the disease.

Additionally, we have initiated a deep cleaning of all areas that the patient may have occupied for more than 15 minutes.

All proper protocols are in place at this time.

Updates to follow as they become available.

8. Please note media inquiries if any: None at this time

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From: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)** Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov
Subject: **Re: positive covid -19 (privileged & confidential)**
Date: **Mar 22, 2020 at 11:02:32 AM**
To: **Moran, Paul J (VET)** Paul.J.Moran2@mass.gov
Cc: **Urena, Francisco (VET)** francisco.urena@mass.gov, **Preston, Anthony (VET)** Anthony.Preston@mass.gov, **Foley, Debra (HLY)** Debra.Foley@mass.gov

Mr Secretary

Both DPH and local Holyoke board of health notified.

Working the staffing numbers as we speak and will have shortly.

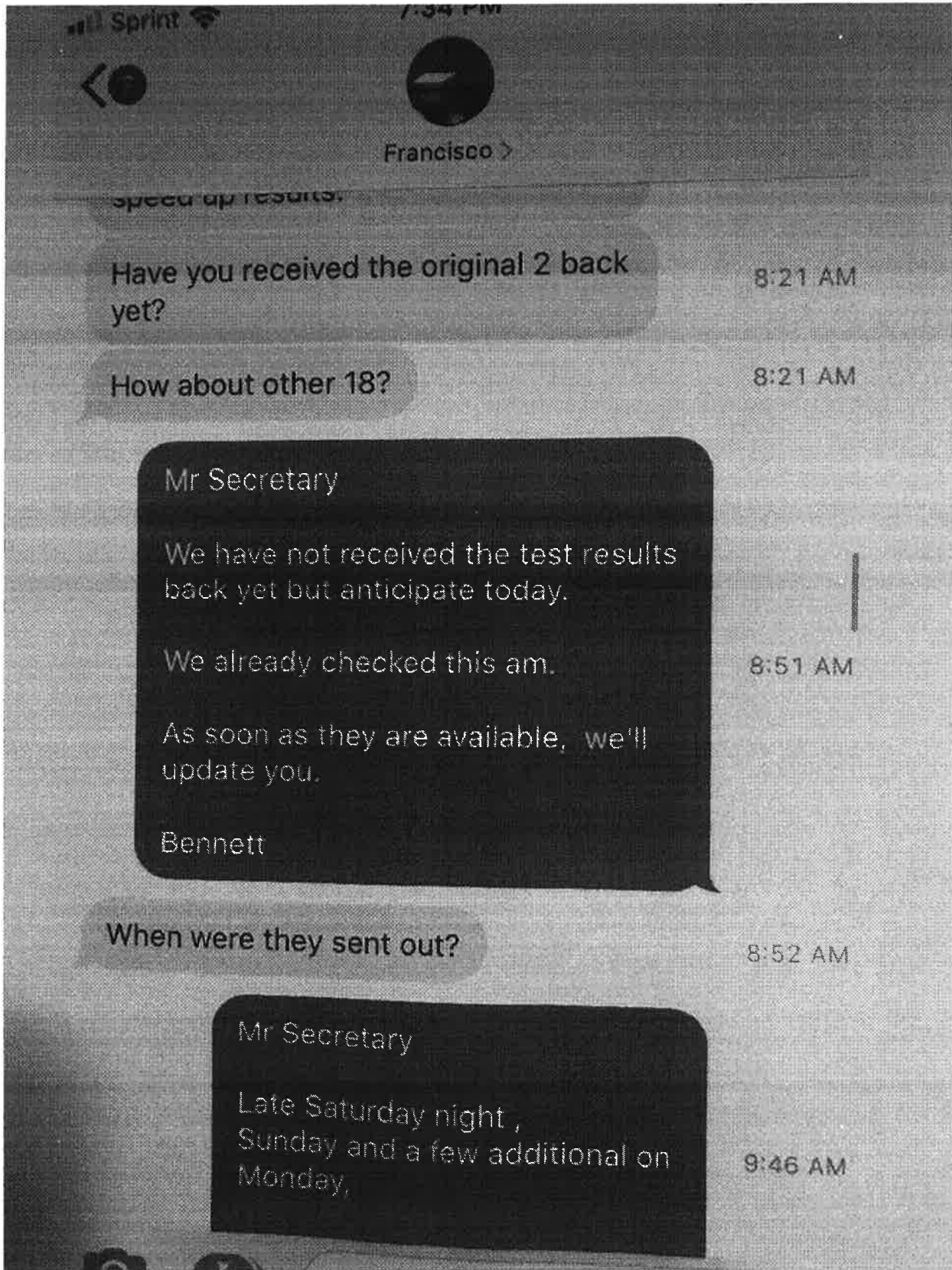
Sincerely

Bennett Walsh

Superintendent Soldiers home in Holyoke

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12/12



William M. Bennett <wbennett@dwpm.com>

[Redacted]

[Quoted text hidden]

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www

From: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)** Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov
Subject: **FW: CRI HLY- 25 March**
Date: **Mar 25, 2020 at 1:42:00 PM**
To: **Urena, Francisco (VET)** francisco.urena@mass.gov, **Mick, Catherine G (EHS)** Catherine.G.Mick@MassMail.State.MA.US, **Karanovich, Brooke (EHS)** Brooke.Karanovich2@mass.gov, **Arons, Colleen M. (EHS)** Colleen.M.Arons@MassMail.State.MA.US, **Tsai, Daniel (EHS)** Daniel.Tsai@MassMail.State.MA.US
Cc: **Moran, Paul J (VET)** Paul.J.Moran2@mass.gov, **Foley, Debra (HLY)** Debra.Foley@mass.gov, **Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY)** Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov

Good afternoon Mr. Secretary, undersecretary Mick, Deputy Secretary Tsai, Brooke, & Colleen

Attached is the HLY critical incident report for covid -19 test results.

Please let us know if you have any additional RFI's and we'll update as necessary.

Thanks for all the support.

Bennett

Bennett W. Walsh
Superintendent

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Soldiers' Home in Holyoke
110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA 01040

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Critical Incident Report (updated 3/2019)

The Critical Incident Report is intended as an early warning for the Executive Office of Health and Human Services of any major event involving a staff member or consumer of EOHHS services that may warrant attention or action by the Secretary and the Governor, as well as to provide information to The Child Advocate pursuant to Chapter 176 of the Acts of 2008.

- The form should be completed by a senior staff person (e.g., Commissioner, Deputy or Assistant Commissioner, Chief of Staff) as soon as an event is known.
- Send the form to EOHHS Secretary Sudders, Undersecretary Mick, Chief of Staff Darcy and Assistant Secretary Torgerson.
 - If the incident involves a child (as defined by your agency), also send the form to Maria Mossaides and Christine Palladino-Downs at the Office of the Child Advocate.
 - If the incident involves a child's death, also send the form to Paola Ferrer, DCF Chief of Staff.
 - If the incident involves serious issues with an employee, also send the form to EOHHS General Counsel Sharon Boyle and HR Officer Catherine Starr
- Incidents to be reported include fatalities, near fatalities, serious bodily injuries, imminent risk, serious employee misconduct, and serious threats of harm to EOHHS personnel and/or facilities.
- Notice to the Secretary should not preclude taking appropriate action immediately to address an incident.

ANSWER EACH ITEM BELOW:

1. Date of Report: **March 25, 2020.**

2. Reporting Agency: **Soldiers' Home in Holyoke.**

3. Name, title, phone number of person filing report: **Bennett Walsh, Superintendent, (413) 552-4700.**

4. Does the report pertain to a child (as defined by your agency)? **No.**

If Yes:

- Is the child receiving services from EOHHS agency/agencies?
- Is the child in the state's custody?
- How old is the child?

5. Is the agency already conducting an investigation? **Yes.**

6. Is a law enforcement agency already conducting an investigation? **No.**

7. Please describe incident in detail noting place, date, and time of incident to the extent known. If the incident involves an EOHHS client, please provide a brief client history noting the last known agency/client contact, key staff relationships (caseworker, supervisor), case status when the incident occurred, any action taken as a result of the incident, and proposed next steps:

On March 24, 2020, the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke received notice that one of its employees has tested positive for COVID-19. The employee's last day of work was March 19, 2020, and the employee was tested on March 20, 2020. The employee is currently quarantined at home.

All proper protocols are in place at this time. All required PPE is in use.

The Holyoke Board of Health has been notified.

A trace has been initiated to identify any potentially exposed veterans and employees.

Updates to follow as they become available.

8. Please note media inquiries if any: None at this time.

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~~Handwritten scribbles in black ink, possibly obscuring text or a signature.~~

LT

From: [Lindsey Tucker](#) >

To: [Bennett Walsh](#) >

Cc: [Francisco Urena](#) > [Catherine Starr](#) >

[Nancy Shimel](#) > [David Clinton](#) >

[Vanessa Lauziere](#) > [Vanessa Gosselin](#) >

[Joyce Cohen](#) > [Melissa Cumming](#) >

March 25, 2020 at 1:09 PM

Re: soldiers home in Holyoke POC's

Good afternoon Superintendent Bennett,

Thank you for your patience! I am including two of our top staff on this email to support you and your team: Joyce Cohen who has already had some involvement in the Soldier's Home situation as well as Melissa Cumming who is one of our healthcare associated infections team.

It would be helpful for them to speak with your clinical staff for details and then to have a broader call on planning and steps.

Melissa and Joyce - please follow up directly with the HLY team (cut & pasted from the Superintendent's email below) and make a plan for next steps. Thank you!

From: **Tucker, Lindsey (DPH)**
Lindsey.Tucker@MassMail.State.MA.US
Subject: **Re: soldiers home in Holyoke POC's**
Date: **Mar 25, 2020 at 4:25:03 PM**
To: **Urena, Francisco (VET)**
francisco.urena@mass.gov
Cc: **Starr, Catherine (EHS)**
catherine.starr@MassMail.State.MA.US,
Walsh, Bennett (HLY)
Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov, **Moran, Paul J**
(VET) Paul.J.Moran2@mass.gov

Secretary Urena,

I just heard from our DPH staff that they completed the call with staff at the Soldier's Home. From their perspective, it sounds like Holyoke staff are doing everything they can and consistent with DPH recommendations. DPH will send supporting guidance documents and maintaining regular contact around cases, staffing and PPE levels.

Please let me know if we can be of additional assistance.

Thank you,

Lindsey Tucker
Associate Commissioner
MA Department of Public Health
Cell: 857.300.7937

6





Francisco >

You have other tests waiting? How many?

9:46 AM

Mr Secretary-

Looking at it now as just got the results

28 tested
7 positives
3 negative

18 pending

Bennett

9:47 AM

Does local board know, let's discuss in morning call

9:50 AM

Mr Secretary

Yes- we are in the process of informing board of health now,

Bennett

9:54 AM



Text Message



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8

~~Handwritten scribbles~~

From: Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY) <Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 3:41 PM

To: 'colleen.m.arons@mass.gov'

Cc: Walsh, Bennett (HLY) <Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov>; Foley, Debra (HLY) <Debra.Foley@mass.gov>

Subject: COVID-19 Daily Reporting - Soldiers' Home in Holyoke

Ms. Arons -

Attached is the updated daily COVID-19 report for the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke.

Please advise if additional information is required.

Thank you.

Regards,
- Mark

Mark Yankopoulos

Legal Counsel

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Soldiers' Home in Holyoke

110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA 01040



413-552-4708 (Main)

413-538-7968 (Fax)

Mark.Yankopoulos@massmail.state.ma.us

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From: Arons, Colleen M. (EHS)

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 3:48 PM

To: Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY); 'colleen.m.aronson@mass.gov'

Cc: Walsh, Bennett (HLY); Foley, Debra (HLY)

Subject: RE: COVID-19 Daily Reporting - Soldiers' Home in Holyoke

Thank you Mark. I just got off the phone with Superintendent Walsh and was under the impression there were only 6 new cases for today. Did you just receive 2 more positives? Also I was not planning to include the 2 deaths since those results are pending. I assume you didn't include those, but please let me know either way. Thanks!

From: **Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY)** Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov
Subject: **RE: COVID-19 Daily Reporting - Soldiers' Home in Holyoke**
Date: **Mar 27, 2020 at 4:41:48 PM**
To: **Arons, Colleen M. (EHS)** Colleen.M.Arons@MassMail.State.MA.US,
colleen.m.arons@mass.gov 'colleen.m.arons@mass.gov'
Cc: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)** Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov, **Foley, Debra (HLY)**
Debra.Foley@mass.gov

Ms. Arons -

To confirm, we did receive an additional two positive reports this afternoon. Those were included in the update that I sent to you. As of now our confirmed positive total is 9 residents and 1 employee.

The report only includes the positive test results that we have received so far. Pending results are not included.

Thank you.

Regards,
- Mark

Mark Yankopoulos
Legal Counsel

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Soldiers' Home in Holyoke
110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA 01040



413-552-4708 (Main)
413-538-7968 (Fax)

Mark.Yankopoulos@massmail.state.ma.us

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From: Arons, Colleen M. (EHS)

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 4:44 PM

To: Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY); 'colleen.m.aron@mass.gov'

Cc: Walsh, Bennett (HLY); Foley, Debra (HLY)

Subject: RE: COVID-19 Daily Reporting - Soldiers' Home in Holyoke

Thank you Mark. Yes we are only collecting confirmed cases. Not pending. Can you please respond with which case was today's death? If you can tell me which row is that individual then I will color code that in my roll up

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~~81~~ ~~WA~~

From: Quersher, Suzanne (EHS)

Suzanne.Quersher@MassMail.State.MA.US

Subject: Holyoke situation

Date: Mar 27, 2020 at 1:03:00 PM

To: Walsh, Bennett (HLY)

Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov

Cc: Krok, Jeffrey R (EHS)

Jeffrey.R.Krok@mass.gov, **Crystal, Erica (EHS)**

Erica.Crystal@MassMail.State.MA.US,

Moran, Paul J (VET)

Paul.J.Moran2@mass.gov

Hi Bennett,

I understand that Holyoke needs as much help as it can get now. We have asked how to request assistance from the National Guard. We are also looking into local community resources for you such as recent retirees. I understand on a call earlier Eric Sheehan was able to list a number of resources such as long term care networks. I also understand you are in touch with Western Mass Hospital and local EMTs for additional resources.

This is an extremely trying time and I know an email from me does not help. Please let us know how you think we can help further. The Unions are aware of our view on the frequent call outs. You have guidance from DPH on what to do about calls with symptoms, calls from people refusing to get tests, and calls from those who are "high risk." We should definitely continue to use your contact at DPH for guidance on sick call outs, and support you that sick leave might not be appropriate if someone is calling out who is not symptomatic.

- Suzanne



From: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)** Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov
Subject: **RE: request national guard medical assistance**
Date: **Mar 27, 2020 at 1:24:00 PM**
To: **Urena, Francisco (VET)** francisco.urena@mass.gov
Cc: **Moran, Paul J (VET)** Paul.J.Moran2@mass.gov, **Poppe, Cheryl (CHE)**
Cheryl.Poppe@MassMail.State.MA.US, **Rathje, Jennifer (VET)**
Jennifer.Rathje@mass.gov, **Preston, Anthony (VET)**
Anthony.Preston@mass.gov, **Foley, Debra (HLY)** Debra.Foley@mass.gov,
Quersher, Suzanne (EHS) Suzanne.Quersher@MassMail.State.MA.US,
Krok, Jeffrey R (EHS) Jeffrey.R.Krok@mass.gov

Mr. secretary-

We would like to formally request national guard assistance (medical personnel wise) to assist in our staffing for this pandemic.

Please advice if you need additional information and our what the possible timeframe would be for procurement. (Process would go to the command center, then mema, then to the national guard).

Sincerely,

Bennett

Bennett W. Walsh
Superintendent

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Soldiers' Home in Holyoke
110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA 01040



[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
413-538-7968 (Fax)

Bennett.Walsh@massmail.state.ma.us

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#

02

From: **Urena, Francisco (VET)**
francisco.urena@mass.gov
Subject: **Re: request national guard
medical assistance**
Date: **Mar 27, 2020 at 1:43:23 PM**
To: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)**
Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov
Cc: **Moran, Paul J (VET)**
Paul.J.Moran2@mass.gov

Bennett-

We are exploring all options at this time.

**Where are you with your recent retirees who can come in as
120? Has that list been made available to you?**

**Secretary Francisco A. Ureña
Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services
600 Washington Street, 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 210-5767**

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From: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)**

Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov

Subject: **re: Update from HLY since 3:00 pm call**

Date: **Mar 27, 2020 at 4:11:00 PM**

To: **Arons, Colleen M. (EHS)**

Colleen.M.Arons@MassMail.State.MA.US,

Rego, Alda (EHS)

Alda.Rego@MassMail.State.MA.US, **Urena,**

Francisco (VET) francisco.urena@mass.gov,

Starr, Catherine (EHS)

catherine.starr@MassMail.State.MA.US

Cc: **Mick, Catherine G (EHS)**

Catherine.G.Mick@MassMail.State.MA.US

Good afternoon Mr. Secretary, Alda, Catherine, & Colleen:

The following is an update since our 3:00 pm conference call:

New confirmed positive COVID cases – 2

New total confirmed positive COVID cases in the facility – 9 total

One of our confirmed COVID positives did expire today (we received his positive test results today)

Speaking with our medical director Doctor Clinton- he advised that the board of health will make the determination of the exact cause of death.

Believe that there may have been confusion (inadvertently) on “cause of death” and hence the discussion is it a confirmed COVID 19 as the cause of death.

We passed that the veteran who expired today was a positive COVID -19 case.

Thanks,

Bennett

Bennett W. Walsh

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DATA

EOHHS Confirmed COVID-19 Daily Case Tracker

Instructions: 1) agency should report only "confirmed" COVID-19 cases, 2) only show one case per row, 3) do NOT share any personally identifiable info on the case, 4) agency lead to update tracker with the agency's

| Agency (select) | Department/ Unit/ Team - e.g., IT, Provider Name - If Finance, etc. (write in) | Program Integrity | Facility Address (write in) | STATE employee? (Y/N) | VENDOR employee? (Y/N) | CLIENT / consumer /program participant /resident? (Y/N) | Date of Positive COVID-19 Test (MM/DD) |
|------------------------|--|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---|--|
| DTA | | N/A | XXX Main Street, Town, MA | Yes | No | No | 3/16/20 |
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | Care Center 1 | N/A | 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA | Yes | No | No | 3/27/20 |
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | | N/A | 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA | No | No | No | 3/27/20 |

DATA

with the agency's new cases and send to Colleen M. Arous@mass.gov by 3pm daily

| COV ID-19 Test (MM/DD) | Last day at work (MM/DD) | DPH Notified? (Y/N) | Potential exposure to employees/clients (Y/N) | Have these potential exposures been informed? (Y/N) | Have applicable Quarantine / Isolation procedures been followed? (Y/N) | Has appropriate Facility Cleaning occurred? (Y/N) | Date Reported (MM/DD) | Reported By (Agency POC) e-mail address |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---|---|--|---|-----------------------|---|
| 3/16/20 | 3/16/20 | Yes | No | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown | 3/23/20 | jane.doc@mass.gov |
| 3/17/20 | 3/21/20 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 3/28/20 | Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov |
| 3/27/20 | | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 3/28/20 | Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov |

From: **Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY)** Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov
Subject: **RE: COVID-19 Daily Reporting - Soldiers' Home in Holyoke**
Date: **Mar 28, 2020 at 11:39:12 AM**
To: **Arons, Colleen M. (EHS)** Colleen.M.Arons@MassMail.State.MA.US
Cc: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)** Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov, **Foley, Debra (HLY)**
Debra.Foley@mass.gov

Ms. Arons -

Correct - the employee's test result came in after hours yesterday.

I have attached an amended report for today, as I was just notified that we received a positive test for one of the veterans, making our total to date 2 positive employees and 10 positive veterans.

Thank you.

Regards,
- Mark

Mark Yankopoulos
Legal Counsel

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Soldiers' Home in Holyoke
110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA 01040



413-552-4708 (Main)
413-538-7968 (Fax)

Mark.Yankopoulos@massmail.state.ma.us

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From: Arons, Colleen M. (EHS)
Sent: Saturday, March 28, 2020 11:29 AM
To: Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY)
Cc: Walsh, Bennett (HLY); Foley, Debra (HLY)
Subject: Re: COVID-19 Daily Reporting - Soldiers' Home in Holyoke

Thank you, Mark. Assume this one came in last night?

Sent from my iPhone

From: **Arons, Colleen M. (EHS)** Colleen.M.Arons@MassMail.State.MA.US
Subject: **Re: COVID-19 Daily Reporting - Soldiers' Home in Holyoke**
Date: **Mar 28, 2020 at 11:55:05 AM**
To: **Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY)** Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov
Cc: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)** Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov, **Foley, Debra (HLY)**
Debra.Foley@mass.gov

Thanks Mark. Our due date for these reports is 3pm and given the fluidity of the situation and your pending tests, I imagine you may get more by 3, so I will wait on adding your info in until we get closer. In general, you might want to consider holding on sending your report to me until closer to 3 each day.

Sent from my iPhone

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2 People >

Sun, Mar 29, 9:52 AM

Francisco Urena

Good morning - I'm jumping on a call with HHS at 1130. I'll be asking for more support for the homes. Can I get the information I requested above? I will created a spreadsheet to track this, will share via email.

9:52 AM

Will send prior to the deadline

10:09 AM

Francisco Urena

Also add how many staff you have out on quarantine. Thanks Cheryl for info.

10:59 AM

HLY
28 tested
10 positives
3 negatives
15 awaiting results
2 veterans who expired were covid positive
3 staff members positives
6 on quarantine (number is squishy as we are confirming the call outs

11:21 AM



Text Message



From: Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY) Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov
Subject: Re: COVID-19 Daily Reporting - Soldiers' Home in Holyoke
Date: Mar 29, 2020 at 2:48:32 PM
To: Arons, Colleen M. (EHS) Colleen.M.Arons@MassMail.State.MA.US
Cc: Daly, Corinne (VET) Corinne.Daly@mass.gov, Urena, Francisco (VET) francisco.urena@mass.gov, Moran, Paul J (VET) Paul.J.Moran2@mass.gov, Walsh, Bennett (HLY) Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov, Foley, Debra (HLY) Debra.Foley@mass.gov

Ms. Arons -

Attached is the daily COVID-19 report for the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke for March 29, 2020.

Please advise if additional information is required.

Thank you.

Regards,
- Mark

Mark Yankopoulos
Legal Counsel

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Soldiers' Home in Holyoke
110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA 01040



413-552-4708 (Main)
413-538-7968 (Fax)

Mark.Yankopoulos@massmail.state.ma.us

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E

EOHHS CO...032920.xlsx
29 KB

Done

EOHHS COVID-19 Case Tracker_032920.xlsx



DATA

EOHHS Confirmed COVID-19 Daily Case Tracker

Instructions: 1) agency should report only *confirmed* COVID-19 cases. 2) only show one case per row. 3) do NOT share any personally identifiable info on the case. 4) agency lead to update tracker with the agency's ID

| Agency (select) | Department/ Unit/ Team - e.g., IT, Provider Name - If Finance, etc. (write in) | Program Integrity | Facility Address (write in) | STATE employee? (Y/N) | VENDOR employee? (Y/N) | CLIENT / consumer /program participant /resident? (Y/N) | Date of Positive COVID-19 Test (MM/DD) |
|------------------------|--|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---|--|
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | | N/A | XXX Main Street, Town, MA | Yes | No | No | 3/16/20 |
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | | N/A | 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA | No | No | Yes | 3/27/20 |
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | Care Center 1 | N/A | 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA | Yes | No | No | 3/28/06 |
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | Care Center 1 | N/A | 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA | Yes | No | No | 3/29/06 |
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | | N/A | 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA | No | No | Yes | 3/28/20 |
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | | N/A | 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA | No | No | Yes | 3/29/20 |
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | | N/A | 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA | No | No | Yes | 3/29/20 |
| Holyoke Soldiers' Home | | N/A | 110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA | No | No | Yes | 3/29/20 |

Done

EOHHS COVID-19 Case Tracker_032920.xlsx

DATA

with the agency's new cases and send to Colleen.M.Aronson@mass.gov by 3pm daily

Date of Positive COVID-19 Test (MM/DD) **Last day at work (MM/DD)** **DPH Notified? (Y/N)** **Potential exposure to employees/ clients (Y/N)** **Have those potential exposures been informed? (Y/N)** **Have applicable Quarantine / Isolation procedures been followed? (Y/N)** **Has appropriate Facility Cleaning occurred? (Y/N)** **Date Reported (MM/DD)** **Reported By (Agency POC e-mail address)**

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|-----|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------|
| 3/16/20 | 3/10/20 | Yes | No | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown | 3/23/20 | Jane de...@mass.gov |
| 3/27/20 | | Unknown | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 3/29/20 | Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov |
| 3/28/06 | 3/19/20 | Unknown | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 3/29/20 | Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov |
| 3/29/00 | 3/23/20 | Unknown | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 3/29/20 | Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov |
| 3/28/20 | | Unknown | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 3/29/20 | Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov |
| 3/29/20 | | Unknown | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 3/29/20 | Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov |
| 3/29/20 | | Unknown | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 3/29/20 | Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov |



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~~33~~

From: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)** Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov
Subject: **Re: covid conf call with BOT- Monday 5:00pm**
Date: **Mar 29, 2020 at 4:18:57 PM**
To: **Kevin Jourdain** Kevin.Jourdain@verizon.net, **Cindy Lacoste**
CLacoste@mestek.com, **Chris** ct Dupont9634@charter.net, **CESAR**
LOPEZ cal157@icloud.com, **Cesar** cesara1958@charter.net, **Carmen**
Ostrander cmp2479@gmail.com, **Isaac James Mass**
isaacmass@gmail.com, **Shimel, Nancy (HLY)** Nancy.Shimel@mass.gov

Good evening Board of trustees

Nancy will send out conference call information in a subsequent email for a covid 19 update to the Board.

Sincerely

Bennett Walsh

Superintendent Soldiers' Home in Holyoke

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From: **Yankopoulos, Mark (HLY)** Mark.Yankopoulos@mass.gov
Subject: **This Morning's Text**
Date: **Mar 29, 2020 at 4:31:58 PM**
To: **Walsh, Bennett (HLY)** Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov
Cc: **Shimel, Nancy (HLY)** Nancy.Shimel@mass.gov

Bennett -

I got with Vanessa G. about the data you need for tomorrow.

Veterans:

15 positive

25 pending

4 deaths with positive test results

4 deaths with pending test results

Recovered is unknown at this time. I'll have to check with Dr. Clinton first thing in the morning.

Staff:

4 positive

Recovered is unknown at this time. I'll have to check with Dr. Clinton first thing in the morning.

That's all the confirmed information we have. Let me know if you need any additional information.

**Regards,
- Mark**

From: Amy Phillips <Amy.Phillips@wwlp.com>

Date: March 28, 2020 at 9:26:59 AM EDT

To: "Preston, Anthony (VET)" <Anthony.Preston@mass.gov>, "Walsh, Bennett (HLY)" <Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov>

Subject: Soldiers' Home in Holyoke

CAUTION: This email originated from a sender outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mail system. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Anthony;

We have been contacted by an employee at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke that the facility has received an IJ rating (immediate jeopardy) for not following the protocols for COVID-19. They allege that one veteran has died and others are sick with the symptoms, that the management is refusing to test sick vets on the dementia unit placing all the rest of the vets on the open unit in jeopardy, families are not being appraised of the situation, and staff are not having their temperatures and other symptoms checked before entering the building. We have received a photo of a tent in the parking lot from a resident who lives nearby.

What is happening at this facility? Will the state be shutting it down? Who is responsible for this lapse in care?

Amy Phillips

22News Digital LIVE program/Investigative Producer

WWLP 22News & The CW Springfield

One Broadcast Center

Chicopee, MA 01013

amy.phillips@wwlp.com

413-377-1190 Office

From: Preston, Anthony (VET) Anthony.Preston@mass.gov
Subject: Re: Soldiers' Home in Holyoke
Date: Mar 28, 2020 at 10:42:36 AM
To: Walsh, Bennett (HLY) Bennett.Walsh@mass.gov

Bennett- please do not respond. I am working on a response now

Best,

Anthony Preston
Department of Veterans' Services
Director of Legislative and Media Relations

From: Amy Phillips <Amy.Phillips@wwlp.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 28, 2020 9:26 AM
To: Preston, Anthony (VET); Walsh, Bennett (HLY)
Subject: Soldiers' Home in Holyoke

CAUTION: This email originated from a sender outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' mail system. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Anthony,

We have been contacted by an employee at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke that the facility has received an IJ rating (immediate jeopardy) for not following the protocols for COVID-19. They allege that one veteran has died and others are sick with the symptoms, that the management is refusing to test sick vets on the dementia unit placing all the rest of the vets on the open unit in jeopardy, families are not being appraised of the situation, and staff are not having their temperatures and other symptoms checked before entering the building. We have received a photo of a tent in the parking lot from a resident who lives nearby.

What is happening at this facility? Will the state be shutting it down? Who is responsible for this lapse in care?

Amy Phillips
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