

# Goodwin House Public Statement | April 10, 2020

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## Update | Goodwin House Infection Precaution Efforts

*Below, please read a letter that we distributed via email to families and friends of Goodwin House Residents on the evening of Friday, April 10, 2020.*

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Another week gone by! We hope that all of you are doing well, and finding ways to stay active and engaged as you stay at home.

Thank you for all you are doing to support our efforts to keep the Goodwin House community infection-free. As of this writing, we still have no confirmed cases of COVID-19 on either campus. We know how much your efforts, and those of our residents and staff, are doing to keep all of us healthy.

## Videos from Our President & CEO

Yesterday, we shared with you [this video from Rob Liebreich](#). He expressed gratitude to the Goodwin House family and provided an update on our latest infection precaution efforts. Rob also recorded [a video especially for our dedicated staff members and their families](#). We are grateful for the devotion our staff continues to show our residents, and the support that our staff receive from their family members who support them at home - they are all invaluable to us during this time.

If you'd like to share a message of thanks with our staff members, please get in touch with us. You can send an email to [communications@goodwinhouse.org](mailto:communications@goodwinhouse.org)

## Weekly Resident Update

Several protocols have changed this week as we responded to the latest guidance from local health departments and the CDC. We featured them in this week's Resident Update. Each protocol change was made in an effort to limit the possibility of exposure to COVID-19 on our campuses as we move into the expected peak period across our region.

*We are committed to keeping you, residents and staff healthy.  
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Here are key protocols of note:

- Room Service: We now provide residents with room service. Residents receive all three meals delivered directly to their apartments.
- Mask Protocol: All staff members are now wearing either cloth or surgical masks based on their work responsibilities. Residents are asked to wear cloth masks when they are outside of their apartments as well.
- Delivery Protocol: Friends and family dropping off items for residents must now call the Reception Desk so that staff can meet them outside the front entrance to pick up deliveries. Staff will then take steps to disinfect the packages before giving or delivering them to residents

### **Q&A on Policy Changes**

This week, we also established a new protocol for residents who leave campus. We are now requiring that all residents who leave campus be quarantined for five days upon their return. A Q&A that includes full details about this new policy was shared with residents along with their Weekly Update today. Please read the Q&A and a letter from Chief Operating Officer Linda Lateana explaining the decision.

### **Our Social Workers Can Help**

If you usually help your loved one with bill paying, or otherwise manage their affairs, we know it may be especially difficult right now to not be able to visit. Our social work staff can help. As you speak to your loved one, if you detect increased despondency, uneasiness or distress, please inform the social work staff so they can check in with your loved one and assess for depression and anxiety. There are many resources we are sharing with residents in their community's weekly newsletter. If it would be helpful, we can also refer them to a psychiatrist or a therapist who is providing virtual appointments.

### **Continued Gratitude**

This has been a difficult period in all of our lives. We are grateful for the efforts of all of those who are working to keep everyone safe and healthy. Thank you for your continued support of our efforts to keep Goodwin House infection-free.

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April 10, 2020

Dear Residents –

On Wednesday, I wrote to all residents and shared two updated protocols. One was a protocol about residents going off our campuses, and the other was about deliveries to residents. Our Infection Precaution and Planning Core Team had made these decisions just hours before I wrote you. Three facts confronted us that morning:

1. In spite of multiple organization-wide communications and individual one-to-one conversations urging residents to stay on campus, some residents were still leaving our campuses for non-urgent and non-medical reasons.
2. These actions were putting those residents at risk, and putting their fellow residents and our staff at risk should those residents have become exposed to COVID-19 while off campus.
3. Health authorities indicated that the timeline was accelerating for COVID-19 to reach its peak in our region, and instead of reaching its peak in early May, the peak period could begin as early as April 16-17. That is next week.

We communicated our response quickly, because we wanted you to know the immediate consequences of going off campus for non-urgent and non-medical reasons. We also felt responsible to provide your loved ones with advance notice of our new delivery protocol so that they could adjust their schedules for delivering essential items to you.

In retrospect, we should have added a few more sentences to the letter to let you know that we were working out further details and would communicate those details and the rationales for our decisions with the weekly Resident Infection Precaution Update distributed every Friday.

Since we established our Infection Precaution and Planning efforts around the coronavirus in late February, we have based every decision on guidance from these seven sources:

1. Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
2. Guidance from the Virginia Department of Health
3. Guidance from our local health departments – the Alexandria Health Department and the Fairfax County Health Department

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4. Case studies and research in the U.S. and abroad on COVID-19 and infection precautions
5. Guidance from Dr. Mariatu Koroma-Nelson, the Goodwin House Medical Director who is a physician with the Virginia Hospital Center
6. The expertise and experience of the staff leaders who are on our Infection Precaution and Planning Core Team
7. Our most respected peers in senior living across the United States that have already faced COVID-19 cases and generously shared their learnings

Every protocol we've adopted was the result of a full team discussion and based on not just one but multiple sources of guidance.

The majority of input we have received from residents, staff and family members has been overwhelmingly supportive of our most recent protocols. We also have received thoughtful questions about those protocols. We are grateful for the opportunity to respond to them in the attached Q&A.

As mentioned earlier in this letter, the next two weeks are projected to be the apex of COVID-19 in our region. It will be painful and difficult to read headlines about the loss of lives around us. We are already working with our Chaplains, Social Work teams and Clinical Pastoral Education Director to prepare resources and webinars to help us all process this loss, grieve and support one another in staying healthy and safe. As our President and CEO Rob Liebreich said in his video message to the Goodwin House Family this week, we are stronger together.

I am profoundly grateful for your resilience, support of our infection precaution efforts and commitment to the Goodwin House family. We are, indeed, stronger together.

Linda L. Lateana  
Chief Operating Officer

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## Questions & Answers on Recent COVID-19 Infection Precaution Protocols

April 10, 2020

### Questions about Medical Protocols

#### **Q. Who decides if my medical appointment is essential or non-essential?**

A. Our Medical Director, Dr. Mariatu Koroma-Nelson, and your physician will make that determination. If you are uncertain if your medical appointment is essential, please contact:

- GHBC Residents: Justin Carwile at 703.578.7100 or [jcarwile@goodwinhouse.org](mailto:jcarwile@goodwinhouse.org)
- GHA Residents: Cathy Farmer at 703.824.1157 or [cfarmer@goodwinhouse.org](mailto:cfarmer@goodwinhouse.org)

#### **Q. If I go out for an essential medical appointment, do I have to be in quarantine for five days?**

A. Yes. This decision has been updated since our communication to residents on Wednesday. In addition to the five day quarantine, residents leaving campus for any reason will be required to take their temperature twice daily and report their temperature reading to the clinic. This guidance is based on case research in the U.S. and globally that asymptomatic carriers are more likely to be infectious with a higher viral load prior to the incubation period. It also aligns with recent medical reports supporting a five day quarantine with twice daily temperature checks for individuals with no known direct exposure.

#### **Q. Why is the quarantine for five days instead of 14 days?**

A. 14-day quarantines are for those individuals who have had direct exposure to an individual with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19.

#### **Q. What are the options for tele-health?**

A. The Federal Government has amended regulations on tele-health options. Tele-health is healthcare provided remotely by means of technology and tele-communication. Most physician offices offer some form of tele-health as they have been required to limit the number of patients they see. We suggest you contact your physician to learn more about their offerings. In the near future, Dr. Koroma-Nelson's patients at Goodwin House will receive instructions for how to access the Virginia Hospital Center's tele-health options.

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## Questions about the Off Campus Protocol

### **Q. Why can't I drive to the park and take a walk, or play golf?**

A. We strongly urge that you do not. Here's why: you cannot control social distancing when you are off campus. You cannot control whom and what you encounter when you are off campus. You cannot control exposure to COVID-19 when you are off our campus. Every one of the health authorities that we follow has asked every citizen in our country to avoid unnecessary risks. Going off campus for anything other than essential or medical needs is an unnecessary risk to you, other residents and staff.

## Questions regarding a Confirmed COVID-19 Case at a Goodwin House Campus

### **Q. What are the contingency plans if we get a positive case on one of our campuses?**

A. If a resident in independent living tests positive for COVID-19, the resident will either be in quarantine in their apartment or a dedicated area in the Health Care Center, pending guidance from Dr. Koroma-Nelson. If a resident in assisted living or health care tests positive for COVID-19, we will move them to the dedicated area in the Health Care Center. We have dedicated a household in the GHBC Health Care Center and a small house in the GHA Health Care Center to safely care for residents who test positive for COVID-19.

In addition, we have dedicated staff at both communities that will provide care for residents with COVID-19. These dedicated staff teams will wear full Personal Protective Equipment while supporting these residents. This approach will ensure that Goodwin House cares for our residents with COVID-19 while reducing the risk of spreading the virus to other residents and staff.

### **Q. How will family members of residents with COVID-19 be updated on their loved one's condition? Will they be able to be in contact with their loved one?**

A. Family members of residents with COVID-19 will be kept updated on their loved ones condition and will be provided a central point of contact to help them stay informed.

### **Q. How will residents be notified if we have a confirmed COVID-19 case?**

A. If we have a resident or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19, we will notify residents, staff and all residents' family members for whom we have emails. We will be transparent in our updates and post them on the COVID-19 page on our website ([www.goodwinhouse.org/COVID-19](http://www.goodwinhouse.org/COVID-19)).

## Questions about Screening Desk Precautions

**Q. How would the staff member at the screening desk be able to determine who left the campus vs. who was just walking on the grounds and returning?**

A. Our screening desk staff members and reception desk teams are actively monitoring all individuals entering the front entrances of each community. We ask all residents who leave campus to check in with the screening desk. Residents who have gone off campus will be fully screened upon their return. Residents who have gone for a walk or walked their dog on campus will be required to let the screener know where they have been (they will not be screened upon their return).

There is also an honor system to uphold. We ask every resident to support the honor system.

## Questions about Meal Delivery

**Q. What prompted the decision to move to meal-delivery? Why now?**

A. We moved quickly to meal delivery to residents because we received notification this week that the peak of COVID-19 in our region would occur two weeks earlier than projected. We were duty-bound to take every precaution for the health and wellness of our residents and staff, so we adopted the meal delivery protocol promptly.