



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Washington DC 20420

February 9, 2021

In Reply Refer To: 001B  
FOIA Request: 20-05075-F

Austin Evers  
American Oversight  
1030 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite B255  
Washington, DC 20005  
foia@americanoversight.org

Dear Mr. Evers:

This is the Initial Agency Decision (IAD) to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Office of the Secretary, U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (OSVA), dated March 16, 2020, and assigned FOIA tracking number **20-05075-F**. You requested: "All daily briefings or situation reports (or other similar updates designed to keep leadership apprised of breaking events) prepared for, or otherwise provided to, the leadership of your agency that contain information regarding the ongoing coronavirus outbreak" for Secretary Wilkie.

As a reminder, the VHA FOIA Office will separately process your FOIA request for records within the possession of VHA Executive-in-Charge Robert Stone.

OSVA has posted three thousand nine hundred eleven (3,911) pages of COVID records at <https://www.va.gov/FOIA/Library.asp> (click on the "Frequently Requested Records" tab). OSVA does not re-release already posted redacted records that are also responsive to your FOIA request.

**Reasonable Searches Dated 3/27/2020, 4/8/2020, 4/29/2020 & 1/22/2021**

On March 27, 2020, an OSVA FOIA Officer requested that the VA OIT office provide all responsive emails and calendar entries in its possession. On April 8, 2020, the VA OIT office provided responsive records, with an OSVA FOIA Officer to conduct secondary searches.

On April 29, 2020, an OSVA FOIA Officer conducted the following two (2) secondary searches through the email boxes and calendar entries of Robert Wilkie.

**Search 1**

From: Wilkie or RLW

Key Terms: (("daily briefing") or ("situational report")) and (coronavirus or corona or covid or covid19 or covid-19 or SARS or CoV-2 or COV2)

Date: 1/28/20 to 3/27/20

**Search 2**

To: Wilkie or RLW

Stemmed Key Terms: (("daily briefing") or ("situational report")) and (coronavirus or corona or covid or covid19 or covid-19 or SARS or CoV-2 or COV2)

Date: 1/28/20 to 3/27/20

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On January 22, 2021, an OSVA FOIA Officer conducted the following secondary search through the email boxes and calendar entries of Robert Wilkie.

### Search 3

From: @va.gov  
To: RLW or Wilkie  
Terms: covid and daily and report  
Date: 1/28/20 to 3/27/20

These aforementioned three (3) searches yielded two hundred eighty-five (285) responsive pages. OSVA considers approximately one hundred fourteen (114) pages marked as non-public HHS records as non-VA records.

### Initial Agency Decision

After reviewing the two hundred eighty-five (285) pages, OSVA redacts some information with FOIA Exemptions 5, 6, and 7(E). 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5) exempts from required disclosure "inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency." The presidential communications privilege protects agency communications to or from the President or his advisers. Redacted information includes communication amongst VA and White House officials in response to the COVID19 pandemic, including non-public COVID19 data, COVID19 topics, discussion summaries, recommendations, pros, cons, background information, flu incidence data, chronic illness information, intra-agency coordination, union's positions, and talking points. Loving v. DOD, 550 F.3d 32, 37-38 (D.C. Cir. 2008) (Exemption 5 "incorporates" Presidential Communications Privilege, which protects "'communications directly involving and documents actually viewed by the President,' as well as documents 'solicited and received' by the President or his 'immediate White House advisers'" (internal citations omitted)); Berman v. CIA, 378 F. Supp. 2d 1209, 1219-20 (E.D. Cal. 2005) (same), aff'd on other grounds, 501 F.3d 1136 (9th Cir. 2007); Judicial Watch, Inc. v. DOJ, 365 F.3d 1108, 1110 n.1 (D.C. Cir. 2004) ("embrac[ing] the definitional analysis set forth" in In re Sealed Case, 121 F.3d 729, 749-50, 752 (D.C. Cir. 1997), protecting documents covered by Presidential Communications Privilege); Amnesty Int'l USA v. CIA, 728 F. Supp. 2d 479, 522 (S.D.N.Y. 2010) ("all twenty documents reflect or memorialize communications between senior presidential advisers and other United States government officials and are therefore properly withheld").

Under the attorney-client and work product privileges, the VA redacts portions of records, emails, and communications between VA employees and VA/WHCO attorneys in response to the COVID19 pandemic, including non-public COVID19 data, COVID19 topics, discussion summaries, recommendations, pros, cons, background information, flu incidence data, chronic illness information, intra-agency coordination, union's positions, and talking points. The release of this information would impede the ability of VA employees and VA/WHCO attorneys to speak openly and frankly about legal issues in responding to the COVID19 pandemic, and preparing talking points for media interviews. The release of this information would also compromise the VA's legal positions for any lawsuits.

FOIA Exemption 5 permits an agency to withhold material reflecting the thoughts, opinions, and recommendations of federal officials reviewing issues. Under the deliberative process privilege and FOIA Exemption 5, OSVA redacts portions of discussions in response to the COVID19 pandemic, including non-public COVID19 data, COVID19 topics, discussion summaries, recommendations, pros, cons, background information, flu incidence data, chronic illness

information, intra-agency coordination, and union's positions; and talking points to phone calls with U.S. Senators or state governments or media interviews. The information contained in the responsive records is both predecisional and deliberative because it reflects preliminary opinions, proposed solutions, proposed options, proposed actions, proposals, and recommendations, which do not reflect VA's final decision. Exposure of premature discussions before a final decision is made could create undue public confusion. The release of the redacted information would negatively impact the ability of federal employees to openly and frankly consider issues amongst themselves when deliberating, discussing, reviewing, proposing changes to, and making recommendations on: responding to the COVID19 pandemic, and talking points to phone calls with U.S. Senators or state governors or media interviews. The information reveals the thoughts, deliberations, and opinions that, if released, would have a chilling effect on the ability of federal officials to discuss, opine, recommend or be forthcoming about the agency's issues which require full and frank assessment. Here, the disclosure of the withheld information is likely to compromise the integrity of this deliberative or decision-making process. Moreover, the predecisional character of a document is not altered by the passage of time. Bruscino v. BOP, No. 94-1955, 1995 WL 444406 at \*5 (D.D. C. May 15, 1995), aff'd in part, No. 95-5212, 1996 WL 393101 (D.C. Cir. June 24, 1996); Access Reports v. DOJ, 926 F.2d 1192, 1196-97 (D.C. Cir. 1991) ("talking points" memoranda are predecisional); ACLU v. DHS, 738 F. Supp. 2d 93, 112 (D.D.C. 2010) ("talking points' are predecisional . . . the document itself suggests that a public statement was anticipated at the time of its creation, and given that no official statement has yet been made, the talking points remain ripe recommendations that are ready for adoption or rejection by the Department"); Sec. Fin. Life Ins. Co., No. 03-102-SBC, 2005 WL 839543, at \*11 (D.D.C. Apr. 12, 2005) ("The undisputed evidence establishes that these [talking points] are deliberative."); Judicial Watch, Inc. v. U.S. Dep't of Commerce, 337 F. Supp. 2d 146, 174 (D.D.C. 2004) (protecting "talking points" and recommendations on how to answer questions); St. Louis Sewer Dist., No. 10-2103, at \*18 (E.D. Mo. Mar. 2, 2012) (protecting e-mail communications, "press releases, talking points and 'Q & A,'" drafts, and briefing materials); Citizens for Responsibility & Ethics in Wash. v. DHS, 514 F. Supp. 2d 36, 44 (D.D.C. 2007) (protecting briefing materials concerning Hurricane Katrina response including proposed "solutions and approaches"); Judicial Watch, Inc. v. DOE, 310 F. Supp. 2d 271, 317 (D.D.C. 2004) (protecting briefing materials for Secretary of the Interior), aff'd in part, rev'd in part on other grounds & remanded, 412 F.3d 125, 133 (D.C. Cir. 2005); Klunzinger v. IRS, 27 F. Supp. 2d 1015, 1026 (W.D. 1998) (protecting paper to brief commissioner for meeting); Thompson v. Dep't of the Navy, No. 95-347, 1997 WL 527344, at \*4 (D.D.C. Aug. 18, 1997) (protecting materials to brief senior officials responding to media inquiries, as "disclosure of materials reflecting the process by which the Navy formulates its policy concerning statements to and interactions with the press" could stifle frank communication within the agency), aff'd, No. 97-5292, 1998 WL 202253, at \*1 (D.C. Cir. Mar. 11, 1998) (per curiam); Williams v. DOJ, 556 F. Supp. 63, 65 (D.D.C. 1982) (protecting "briefing papers prepared for the Attorney General prior to an appearance before a congressional committee").

5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6) exempts from required disclosure "personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." FOIA Exemption 6 permits VA to withhold a document or information within a document if disclosure of the information, either by itself or in conjunction with other information available to either the public or the FOIA requester, would result in an unwarranted invasion of an individual's personal privacy without contributing significantly to the public's understanding of the activities of the federal government. Specifically, the information being withheld, as indicated on the attached documents, under FOIA Exemption 6, consists of names, identities,

personal addresses, seating room locations, email addresses, phone numbers, cellular numbers, and facsimile numbers of: federal employees, state government employees, Congressional employees, veterans, and private citizens. Federal employees, state government employees, Congressional employees, veterans, and private citizens retain a significant privacy interest under certain circumstances, such as in instances where the release of their information could represent a threat to their well-being, harassment, or their ability to function within their sphere of employment. However, VA releases the names of VA Senior Executives and reporters. The federal employees, veterans, and private citizens whose information is at issue have a substantial privacy interest in their personal information. In weighing the private versus the public interest, we find that there is no public interest in knowing names, identities, personal addresses, seating room locations, email addresses, phone numbers, cellular numbers, and facsimile numbers of: federal employees, state government employees, Congressional employees, veterans, and private citizens. The coverage of FOIA Exemption 6 is absolute unless the FOIA requester can demonstrate a countervailing public interest in the requested information by demonstrating that the FOIA requester is in a position to provide the requested information to members of the general public and that the information requested contributes significantly to the public's understanding of the activities of the Federal government. Additionally, the requester must demonstrate how the public's need to understand the information significantly outweighs the privacy interest of the person to whom the information pertains. Upon consideration of the records, I have not been able to identify a countervailing public interest of sufficient magnitude to outweigh the privacy interest of the individuals whose names are redacted. The protected information has been redacted and (b)(6) inserted. "Withholding a telephone number or e-mail address, alone, is not sufficient to protect that [privacy] interest; alternate means of contacting and harassing these employees would be readily discoverable on the Internet if this court ordered their names disclosed." Long v. Immigration & Customs Enf't, 2017 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 160719 (D.C. Cir. 2017).

5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(E) exempts from required disclosure information that "would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law." Redacted information includes strategies the government uses to secure borders, to defend the nation with legal or military strategies, and prevent COVID transmission, and law enforcement or military response to the COVID19 pandemic. The release of this information would risk circumvention of the law with respect to unauthorized entry, compromising the strategies and duties of law enforcement and military personnel, and COVID prevention. Redacted information also includes the room numbers of VA police officers, law enforcement and military personnel, and White House employees with security clearances in secured government buildings. Within these rooms are where those people work, gather, and plan their law enforcement or national security or border security or defense operations. The release of this information would risk impersonation, targeting, or violence against the health and safety of: VA police officers, White House employees with security clearances, military members, and those they are charged with protecting.

### **FOIA Mediation**

As part of the 2007 FOIA amendments, the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) was created to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. Using OGIS services does not affect your right to pursue litigation. Under the provisions of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, the following contact information is provided to assist FOIA requesters in resolving disputes:

Mr. Austin Evers  
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**VA Central Office FOIA Public Liaison:**

Name: Doloras Johnson  
Email Address: [vafoiaservice@va.gov](mailto:vafoiaservice@va.gov)

**Office of Government Information Services (OGIS)**

Email Address: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov)  
Fax: 202-741-5769  
Mailing address:  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, MD 20740-6001

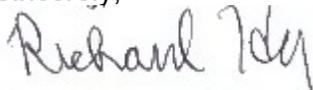
**FOIA Appeal**

This concludes OSVA's response to your FOIA request **20-05075-F**. Please be advised that should you desire to do so, you may appeal the determination made in this response to:

Office of General Counsel (024)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

If you should choose to file an appeal, please include a copy of this letter with your written appeal and clearly indicate the basis for your disagreement with the determination set forth in this response. Please be advised that in accordance with VA's implementing FOIA regulations at 38 C.F.R. § 1.559, your appeal must be postmarked no later than ninety (90) days of the date of this letter.

Sincerely,



Richard Ha, JD, CIPP/G  
OSVA FOIA Officer

Attachments – redacted two hundred eighty-five (285) pages

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Fri, 7 Feb 2020 16:03:47 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Feb 10, 2020.docx

**DAILY BRIEFING BOOK**

**Monday, February 10, 2020**

**SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE**

7:00 – 7:30 am	<b>ERT White House East Room</b> ** will pick up Dr. Stone @ 7:20am in front of 810 Vermont Ave, NW		
7:30 – 8:30 am	<b>Breakfast Reception for Governors of States &amp; Territories</b> ** Dr. Stone will accompany		<b>Tab 1</b>
8:30 am	<b>ERT White House State Floor</b>		
8:30 – 9:15 am	<b>Business Session on Substance Abuse &amp; Mental Health</b> ** Dr. Stone will accompany ** No press ** Kellyanne Conway is the facilitator		<b>Tab 2</b>
9:30 am	<b>ERT VACO</b>		
10:00 – 11:00 am	<b>VA Operations Board Meeting</b>	OBCR	<b>Tab 3</b>
11:30am – Noon	<b>Dr. Stone &amp; VHA re: Coronavirus</b> ** VHA SMEs attending: (b)(6) Carter Mecher (will call in (b)(6)) Dr. Lu Beck	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 4</b>
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>Phone Call w/ Cong Wasserman Schultz re: EHRM</b> ** she will call us	SECVA suite	
2:00 – 2:30 pm	<b>Phone Call w/ Cong Jim Banks re: EHRM</b> ** Cong will call us	SECVA Suite	
3:00 – 3:30 pm	<b>Phone Call w/ Chairman Takano re: EHRM</b> ** we call 202-225-(b)(6)	SECVA Suite	
3:30 – 4:00 pm	<b>Phone Call w/ Senator Tester re: EHRM</b> ** Sen will call us	SECVA Suite	
4:00 – 4:30 pm	<b>Phone Call w/ Senator Boozman re: EHRM</b> ** Sen will call us	SECVA Suite	
4:45 – 5:00 pm	<b>Phone Call w/ Cong Phil Roe</b> ** Cong will call us	SECVA Suite	
5:00 – 5:30 pm	<b>Phone Call w/ Senator Schatz re: EHRM</b> ** Sen will call us ** trying to move this to 5:15pm	SECVA Suite	





**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Tue, 11 Feb 2020 16:51:37 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Feb 14, 2020.docx

**DAILY BRIEFING BOOK**

**Friday, February 14, 2020**

**SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE**

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
11:00 – 12:00 pm	<b>WH All Cabinet Call re: Coronavirus</b>	SECVA Suite	
12:30 – 1:00 pm	<b>ERT Crystal City Marriott,</b> 1999 Richmond Hwy, Arlington, VA		
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>REMARKS: Jewish War Veterans Winter Conference</b>		<b>Speech Binder</b>
1:30 – 2:00 pm	<b>ERT VACO</b>		
2:50 – 3:00 pm	<b>Quick Prep for Dr. Navarro Mtg</b> ** COS & Karen Brazell	SECVA Suite	
3:00 – 3:30 pm	<b>Dr. Peter Navarro re: VA Procurement &amp; Coronavirus</b> Accompanying Dr. Navarro: (b)(6) Policy Advisor (b)(6) VA Attendees: COS Dr. Stone Mike Valentino Karen Brazell	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 1</b>

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Tue, 3 Mar 2020 16:13:05 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 4 2020.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Wednesday, March 4, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
8:30 – 9:30 am	<b>HVAC Hearing AAR &amp; Prep for HAC MilConVA Hearing</b>	OBCR	<b>Hearing Binder</b>
10:00 – 10:30 am	<b>ERT Rayburn 2362B</b> ** COS will accompany		
10:30 – 1:00 pm	<b>HAC MilConVA Budget Hearing</b>	Rayburn 2362B	
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>ERT VACO</b>		
2:00 – 2:30 pm	<b>Coronavirus Update w/ Dr. Stone</b>	SECVA Suite	
4:00 – 4:30 pm	<b>ERT White House Situation Room</b>		
4:30 – 5:30 pm	<b>White House Coronavirus Task Force Principals Mtg</b>		
5:30 – 6:00 pm	<b>ERT Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill 400 New Jersey Ave, NW</b>		
6:00 – 8:00 pm	<b>REMARKS: VFW Legislative Reception &amp; Awards Presentation</b>	Hyatt Regency	
8:00 pm	<b>ERT Residence</b>		

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Wed, 4 Mar 2020 19:58:17 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 5 2020.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Thursday, March 5, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
10:00 – 11:30 am	<b>Bi-Weekly Mtg w/ US &amp; AS</b>	OBCR	<b>Tab 1</b>
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
1:30 – 3:00 pm	<b>EHRM Update Briefing</b>	OBCR	<b>Tab 2</b>
4:30 – 5:30 pm	<b>HOLD: White House Coronavirus Mtg</b>	WH Situation Room	

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Thu, 5 Mar 2020 14:43:45 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 6 2020.docx

**DAILY BRIEFING BOOK**

**Friday, March 6, 2020**

**SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE**

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
9:00 – 9:30 am	(b)(6) & (b)(6) re: <b>Upcoming Speeches</b>	SECVA Suite	
10:00 – 10:30 am	<b>Video Tapings for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Vaught Birthday</b></li> <li>• <b>Women’s History Month</b></li> <li>• <b>Introduction of “Hello Girls”</b></li> </ul>	Broadcast Center	<b>Tab 1</b>
11:30am – Noon	<b>Dr. Stone re: Catch Up Items</b> ** COS will sit in	SECVA Suite	
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
2:00 – 2:30 pm	<b>Hotwash: HAC MilConVA Budget Hearing</b>	OBCR	
3:00 – 3:30 pm	(b)(6) re: <b>Artificial Intelligence</b> ** COS & VHA leadership will sit in	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 2</b>
3:40 – 4:00 pm	<b>ERT White House Situation Room</b>		
4:00 – 5:00 pm	<b>White House Coronavirus Task Force Principals Mtg</b>		<b>See folder</b>
5:00 pm	<b>ERT Residence</b>		



**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Fri, 6 Mar 2020 17:07:02 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 9 2020.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Monday, March 9, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
9:00 – 9:30 am	(b)(6)	SECVA Suite	
11:00 – 11:30 am	<b>2019 VA Physician &amp; Health Care Provider of the Year Awardees</b> ** Photo Op	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 1</b>
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
2:00 – 2:30 pm	<b>Hotwash: HAC MilConVA Budget Hearing</b>	OBCR	
3:00 – 3:30 pm	(b)(6) <b>re: Artificial Intelligence</b> ** Dr. Clancy to sit in	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 2</b>
4:00 – 5:00 pm	<b>HOLD: WH Coronavirus Task Force Principals Mtg</b>	WH Situation Room	<b>See padfolio</b>

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Mon, 9 Mar 2020 16:00:08 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 10 2020.docx

**DAILY BRIEFING BOOK**

**Tuesday, March 10, 2020**

**SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE**

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
8:15 – 8:30 am	<b>ERT Washington Hilton Hotel</b> 1919 Connec Ave, NW International Ballroom East		
8:30 – 9:00 am	<b>REMARKS: American Legion Winter Conference</b>		<b>Speech Binder</b>
9:00 – 9:30 am	<b>ERT Dirksen Bldg / SD-G50</b>		
9:30 – 10:00 am	Introduce (b)(6) at Hearing		<b>See Binder</b>
10:00 – 10:30 am	<b>ERT VACO</b>		
11:30 am – Noon	<b>Prep for Task Force Meeting</b>	SECVA Suite	
12:00 – 12:15 pm	<b>Coir (b)(5) OCLA</b> **Leaving OCLA for promotion & new position in DoD ** Army Military Police ** Veteran of Iraq service ** Worked for SVAC before VA	Rm 500	
12:15 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>Louisiana Health Group w/ Senators Lott &amp; Breaux</b> ** (b)(6) Chairman & CEO, HCH Group ** (b)(6), Exec VP & Chief Strategy & Innovation Officer, LHC Group ** COS & Dr. Lieberman will also sit in	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 2</b>
2:00 – 2:30 pm	(b)(6) ** COS & Dr. Lieberman, Dr. Davis & Jacquie Hayes-Byrd to sit in ** Dr. Clancy to call in	OBCR	<b>Tab 3</b>
3:40 – 4:00 pm	<b>ERT White House Situation Room</b>		
4:00 – 5:30 pm	<b>White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting</b>		
5:30 – 6:00 pm	<b>Press Conference w/Task Force</b>		
6:00 pm	<b>ERT Residence</b>		

**From:** Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.  
**Sent:** Mon, 9 Mar 2020 16:37:04 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** FW: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Congress allocates \$8 billion to combat coronavirus; North Korea launches unidentified projectiles

**From:** AEI's Rundown  
**Sent:** Monday, March 9, 2020 12:33:15 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.  
**Subject:** [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Congress allocates \$8 billion to combat coronavirus; North Korea launches unidentified projectiles



[View as a web page](#)

## The Rundown

A weekly digest of news and analysis from AEI's Foreign and Defense Policy team



The coronavirus (COVID-19) is making its way across the globe, with over 110,000 confirmed cases worldwide and over 3,800 deaths. France, Germany, Iran, Italy, Japan, South Korea, and the US are at the forefront of the pandemic. On Friday, Congress passed an \$8 billion bipartisan emergency bill to combat the coronavirus outbreak. The bill allocates money toward supplies and protective equipment, funding for state and local health departments, and vaccine development. Last week, President Trump visited the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. President Trump cautioned against drastic social changes in areas without significant infections, but his trip reflected the uncertainty and fear that have the nation on edge. After touring the CDC laboratories, the president emphasized that the number of infections and deaths in the US remained limited. In the face of this mounting epidemic, what strategies should health officials and policymakers pursue to meet these goals? How might the spread of the virus affect the global economy and geopolitical landscape? AEI scholars continue to offer commentary and analysis to answer these questions and more. [Visit our coronavirus spotlight page here.](#)

Follow us on Twitter [@AEIfdp](#) to keep up with our latest work.

Have a great week,

AEI's Foreign and Defense Policy team

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## TWEET OF THE WEEK

**Karen Young** @ProfessorKaren

A further isolated and weakened Iran will likely lead to one outcome: political collapse and emboldening of hardliners/military/IRGC. Careful what you wish for, or at least have a plan.

Retweet

## ASIA

*North Korea launched three short-range projectiles off its east coast on Monday, the country's second weapons test in a week.*



On Thursday, **Dan Blumenthal** testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development to assess how disinformation, censorship, and propaganda are central to the Chinese Communist Party's political

survival strategy. The US should ramp up its Chinese-language efforts to tell the truth to the Chinese people about how they are governed. Amid backlash over the coronavirus, the administration should be encouraged to accelerate and broaden efforts to designate Chinese state-controlled media companies as foreign agents.

[Read the full testimony here.](#)

Last week, **Derek Scissors** testified before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism, arguing that limits are overdue in the US-China technological relationship. The US must weigh the earnings of American technology companies against the dangers of supporting the Chinese Communist Party. The focus should be less on individual companies, like Huawei, and more on whole supply chains and industries, as well as the ways the Chinese government dictates technology development. [Read the testimony here.](#)

In 1986, Soviet leaders deliberately lied to the world about the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl. Putting millions at risk, the government prioritized regime stability over a public health emergency. As the death toll from the coronavirus continues to rise, we likewise see authoritarian systems suppressing information, ultimately facilitating the disease's spread. This week, **Yaroslav Trofimov** joined **Danielle Pletka** and **Marc A. Thiessen** to compare the Chinese response to the coronavirus with his experience as a 16-year-old-boy in Kiev during Chernobyl. [Listen here.](#)

Deadly riots in Delhi last month killed at least 44 people, fanning flames between India's Hindu majority and Muslim populations. But the violence highlights a deeper division among Hindus: religious pluralists versus assertive nationalists, argues **Sadanand Dhume** in a Wall Street Journal op-ed. A sensible Indian government would acknowledge the plight of religious minorities and not confuse their political protests with treason. This would require rejecting national Hindu superiority over other faiths — something Prime Minister Narendra Modi appears unwilling to do.

[Continue here.](#)



## MIDDLE EAST

*Last week, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman detained three members of the royal family to end speculation about the health of King Salman. Lebanon plans to default on its foreign debt payment amid a growing economic crisis.*



Last week, the United States and Taliban signed an agreement to end violence in Afghanistan. Even though violence in Afghanistan did not come to a halt, the agreement follows the same model as last fall's abandonment of the Syrian Kurds. In a Washington Examiner op-ed, **Michael Rubin** notes that as Trump's first term comes to a close, there is one consistency to his foreign policy vision: US allies do not matter. Ending "endless wars" may seem like a compelling, populist slogan, but the agreement signed in Doha no more ends the Afghanistan war than President Trump's flurry of tweets last autumn ended the Syrian conflict. [Read it here.](#)

Last week, the United Arab Emirates facilitated an air shipment from the World Health Organization to Iran of medical supplies to help quell the coronavirus outbreak. Gulf states are setting an example for what could soon be an official viral epidemic in the region, mostly generated from Iran, their main adversary. **Karen E. Young** took to the pages of Al-Monitor to argue that whatever the political tensions with Iran, Abu Dhabi and others reflect the insight that global disease is not a contest. The coronavirus' impact in Iran is dire, and the Gulf states recognize that an imploding Iranian regime with desperate citizens and ruthless military leadership is not the desired outcome. [Learn more here.](#)

Following the Taliban's launch of attacks in Afghanistan hours after striking a deal with US troops, **John Yoo** joined "Fox News at Night" to discuss the problems that arise when making a deal with an enemy like the Taliban. The US will uphold its end of the agreement by reducing the amount of US troops in Afghanistan in exchange for the Taliban halting all fighting. The issue is that the Taliban may not keep its word

once the US leaves. [Watch the video here.](#)

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## DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

*Following last week's Super Tuesday, Joe Biden became the favorite to win the Democratic nomination. This Tuesday, Democratic primary voters will go to the polls in six states, assigning 9 percent of the total delegates to the Democratic National Convention.*



Five of the 14 states that participated in the 2020 Super Tuesday presidential primaries also hosted congressional primaries. In a new AEIdeas blog post, **Rebecca Burgess** tracks the results of military veterans running for office after Super Tuesday. While Tulsi Gabbard remains the sole military veteran in the US presidential race, significant numbers of veterans will continue on to the general election at the congressional level this November in Alabama, Arkansas, California, North Carolina, and Texas. [Learn more here.](#)

Ahead of Super Tuesday, **Marc A. Thiessen** joined Fox News' "The Daily Briefing" to discuss the suspension of Mayor Pete Buttigieg's and Sen. Amy Klobuchar's campaigns. Although it appears that Buttigieg and Klobuchar are trying to consolidate the middle lane, they do not have much support to throw at Biden. Even with a Sanders-Biden race, no candidate will secure a majority for the Democratic nomination. [Watch it here.](#)

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## EUROPE

*European countries increased checks on travelers from Italy on Sunday after Italy announced it would put 17 million people under quarantine from the coronavirus.*



Recently, The New York Times and The Washington Post reported the US intelligence community's conclusion that Russia is attempting to interfere in the 2020 elections in favor of Donald Trump. Despite the president's cringe-worthy affection for Vladimir Putin, why would Putin favor Trump over Bernie Sanders? In an op-ed for The Dispatch, **Danielle Pletka** argues that while Trump has been harder on Russia than any administration since the end of the Cold War, Putin would find a lot to like in Sanders' record as a Soviet Union and Communist sympathizer. Yet another good reason to ensure the Russian dictator has no say in our elections. [Read more here.](#)

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has long sought to weaponize Syrian refugees for his own agenda. As Syrian refugees flee to Turkey, Erdoğan has threatened to open the floodgates unless he receives more support from Europe. If Erdoğan wishes to leverage the refugees, then Europe should meet him head-on, notes **Michael Rubin** in a Washington Examiner op-ed. For every Syrian refugee who makes it across the Turkish frontier, European leaders should return one migrant. If busloads of Turks return to its shore (and the remittances they send are cut off), Erdoğan may discover the price of being a bully. [Read it here.](#)

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## MEDIA HIGHLIGHT

There is a battle for control in Iran between far-right hard-liners and relative moderates. The results of Iran's 2020 parliamentary election indicate that more aggression and authoritarianism can be expected from Iran, both within its borders and around the world. In a new "In 60 Seconds" video, **Nicholas Carl** explains that Iran's political landscape is changing profoundly, and there is trouble ahead for Iran's people, the Middle East, and most probably, the United States. [Watch the video here.](#)



That's a wrap for this week! For more, you can:

Follow [@AEIfdp](#) on Twitter for up-to-the-minute updates

Read more at [www.aei.org/policy/foreign-and-defense-policy](http://www.aei.org/policy/foreign-and-defense-policy)

Tips? Comments? Questions? Email Allison Schwartz at [allison.schwartz@aei.org](mailto:allison.schwartz@aei.org).

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This message is for (b)(6) [@va.gov](#) | [Manage Preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Mon, 9 Mar 2020 20:31:50 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 16 2020.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Monday, March 16, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
8:30-9:00 am	<b>Prep for Coronavirus Task Force Meeting</b>	SecVA Suite	
9:00-9:30am	<b>Meet w/ (b)(6): Upcoming Speeches</b>	SecVA Suite	
11:00-11:30am	<b>Phone Call w/Sen. Boozman – he will call us</b>	SecVA Suite	
12:00n-1:00pm	<b>LUNCH</b>	SecVA Suite	

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Tue, 17 Mar 2020 12:46:38 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 17 2020.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Tuesday, March 17, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	Daily Sync Mtg	SECVA Suite	
8:40 – 9:00 am	ERT White House Situation Room		
9:00 – 10:00 am	White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting		
10:00 -10:30 am	ERT VACO		
11:30am-12:30pm	Lunch	SECVA Suite	
2:30 – 3:00 pm	Phone Call w/ Ranking Member Carter ** SECVA calls RMs cell	SECVA Suite	
5:00 – 5:30 pm	VHA re: End of Day Sync Mtg	SECVA Suite	
6:00 – 6:30 pm	Interview with Bret Baier, Special Reports, Fox News Chanel	TBD	
6:30 – 6:45 pm	ERT ABC News Bureau 1717 Desals St, NW – front door of building		
6:45 – 7:45 pm	Live Interview w/ Linsey Davis, ABC News		
7:45 pm	ERT Residence		



**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Tue, 17 Mar 2020 20:29:58 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 18 2020.docx

**DAILY BRIEFING BOOK**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2020**

**SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE**

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
8:40 – 9:00 am	<b>ERT White House Situation Room</b>		
9:00 – 10:00 am	<b>White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting</b>		
10:00 – 10:30 am	<b>ERT White House Briefing Room</b>		
10:30 – 11:30 am	<b>Corona Virus Press Briefing</b>		
11:30am-12:30pm	<b>Regional Media</b> 1:00pm – Nexstar 1:10pm – Sinclair 1:15pm – Spectrum 1:20pm – WUSA – Tegna 1:30pm – Gray 1:40pm – Hearst 1:50pm – Newsy		
12:30 – 1:00 pm	<b>ERT VACO</b>		
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
1:30 – 2:00 pm	<b>Video Tape PSA</b>	Broadcast Center	<b>Tab 1</b>
2:00 – 3:00 pm	<b>Bi Weekly Mtg w/ US &amp; AS</b>	OBCR	<b>Tab 2</b>
3:30 – 4:00 pm	<b>Radio Interview w/ Carson Frame, Texas Public Radio</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 3</b>
4:00 – 4:30 pm	<b>Radio Interview w/ Tyler Fransen, Grand Junction, KNZZ</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 4</b>
5:00 – 5:30 pm	<b>VHA re: End of Day Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
7:00 – 8:00 pm	<b>Interview w/ Martha MacCallu, Fox News</b>	Broadcast Center	<b>Ta 5</b>

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Wed, 18 Mar 2020 14:43:06 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 19 2020.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Thursday, March 19, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
9:00 – 11:00 am	<b>HOLD: WH Corona Virus TF Mtg</b>		
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>Phone Call w/Ranking Member Carter</b> ** We call cell @ 512-791-(b)(6)	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 2</b>
1:30 – 2:00 pm	<b>Phone Interview w/ Quil Lawrence, NPR</b> ** 202.236-(b)(6)	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 1</b>
2:00 – 2:30 pm	<b>Phone Interview w/Bryan Bender, POLITICO</b> ** We call 202-369-(b)(6)	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 3</b>
3:00- 4:00 pm	<b>SKYPE Mtg w/IOC re: COVID-19 Crisis Action Team</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 4</b>
3:30 – 4:30 pm	<b>VHA COVID 19 Daily Call/Mtg</b>	Rm 1070	
4:30 – 5:00 pm	<b>Radio Interview w/ Jay Price, Chapel Hill, NC, WUNC FM 91.5</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 5</b>
5:00 – 5:30 pm	<b>VHA re: End of Day Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Thu, 19 Mar 2020 13:55:29 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 20 2020.docx

**DAILY BRIEFING BOOK**

**Friday, March 20, 2020**

**SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE**

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
9:00 – 10:00 am	<b>White House Coronavirus Task Force Mtg</b> ** Secure call @ 202-534-(b)(6)	IOC SCIF	
10:45 – 11:00 am	<b>Phone Interview w/ David Webb Show, SiriusXM Patriot</b> ** 212-607-(b)(6)	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 2</b>
11:30am-12:30pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
12:30 – 1:00 pm	<b>Phone Interview w/ Rick Hamada, KHVA Honolulu, Hawaii</b> ** 808-521-(b)(6)	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 3</b>
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>Phone Interview w/ The Todd Starnes Show (National Radio)</b> ** 770-535-(b)(6) or 770-531-(b)(6)	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 4</b>
1:30 – 2:00 pm	<b>ERT Fox Studio, 400 North Capitol</b>		
2:00 – 2:20 pm	<b>Interview w/Dana Perino, The Briefing, Fox News</b>		<b>Tab 5</b>
2:20 – 2:50 pm	<b>ERT VACO</b>		
3:35 – 4:00 pm	<b>Phone Interview w/ The Jeff Katz Show, Richmond, VA</b> ** 804-672-(b)(6) or 833-804-(b)(6) ** call a little before start time for set up	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 6</b>
4:30 – 5:00 pm	<b>Phone Call w/ Mayor DeBlasio</b>	SECVA Suite	
5:00 – 5:30 pm	<b>VHA re: End of Day Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Thu, 19 Mar 2020 14:37:28 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 23 2020.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Monday, March 23, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
	<b>White House Coronavirus Task Force Mtg</b>	IOC SCIF	
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
1:05 – 1:30 pm	<b>Phone Interview w/ Kevin Wall, Live &amp; Local Now</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 1</b>
3:00 – 4:00 pm	<b>VAIOC Skype COVID-19 Crisis Action Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
3:30 – 4:30 pm	<b>VHA COVID-19 Update Mtg</b>	Rm 1070	
5:00 – 5:30 pm	<b>VHA re: End of Day Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	



**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Fri, 20 Mar 2020 18:11:31 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 21 2020.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Saturday, March 21, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

9:30 – 10:00 am	<b>ERT VACO</b>		
10:00 – 11:00 am	<b>White House Coronavirus Task Force Meeting</b> ** Secure call @ 202-534- <span style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">(b)(6)</span>	IOC SCIF	
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
2:00 – 3:00 pm	<b>POTUS Phone Call w/ VSOs</b> ** Phone number forthcoming	SECVA Suite	
3:00 pm	<b>ERT Residence</b>		

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Wed, 25 Mar 2020 13:10:34 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 26 2020.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Thursday, March 26, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
9:00 – 9:30 am	<b>Phone Interview w/ Leo Shane, Military Times</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 1</b>
11:00 – 11:30 am	<b>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>Phone Interview w/ Newell Normand, WWL Radio (New Orleans)</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 2</b>
2:00 – 2:30 pm	<b>Weekly Call w/ Takano &amp; Roe re: Coronavirus Update</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 3</b>
2:30 – 3:00 pm	<b>Weekly Call w/ Moran &amp; Tester re: Coronavirus Update</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 3</b>
3:00 – 4:00 pm	<b>HOLD: WH Task Force Meeting</b>	IOC SCIF	
4:00 – 4:30 pm	<b>VHA's COVID Update</b>	Rm 1070	

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Thu, 26 Mar 2020 11:13:50 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 27 2020.docx, COVID-19 Talkers\_updated\_\_03-26\_143pm.docx

DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Friday, March 27, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
9:10 – 9:40 am	<b>Phone Interview w/ Kevin Miller in the Morning, Boise, ID</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 1</b>
9:50 – 10:00 am	<b>Phone Interview w/ “The Drive with Lee Matthews”</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 2</b>
10:30 – 11:00 am	<b>Phone Interview w/ Larry O’Connor, WMAL</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 3</b>
11:00 – 11:30 am	<b>Phone Call w/ Chairman Takano</b> ** Chairman will call SECVA	SECVA Suite	
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>Phone Interview w/ Eddie Burke, KOAN Radio, Anchorage, Alaska</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 4</b>
1:30 – 2:00 pm	<b>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
3:00 – 4:00 pm	<b>HOLD: WH Task Force Mtg</b>	IOC SCIF	
4:00 – 4:30 pm	<b>Stop by VHA’s COVID 19 Update Mtg</b>	Rm 1070	

**VA COVID-19 Response**

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(b)(5)

**What should Veterans do if they believe they may have contracted the coronavirus?**

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(b)(5)

**Fourth Mission**

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(b)(5)

**From:** RLW  
**Sent:** Fri, 27 Mar 2020 15:29:18 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RAH  
**Attachments:** Mar 30 2020.docx, COVID-19 Talkers\_updated\_\_03-30\_1002am.docx



DAILY BRIEFING BOOK

**Monday, March 30, 2020**

SECRETARY ROBERT L. WILKIE

7:45 – 8:15 am	<b>Daily Sync Mtg</b>	SECVA Suite	
10:10 – 10:20 am	<b>Phone Interview w/ Aaron Flint, Montana Talks Radio (LIVE)</b>	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 1</b>
11:00 – 11:30 am	<b>Prep for WH Task Force Mtg</b> VANTS code (b)(6)	SECVA Suite	
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	SECVA Suite	
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<b>Phone Interview w/ Lisa Rein, Washington Post</b> ** 202-821 (b)(6)	SECVA Suite	<b>Tab 2</b>
2:30 – 3:30 pm	<b>WH Task Force Mtg</b>	IOC SCIF	
3:30 – 4:30 pm	<b>VHA's COVID-19 Update</b>	Rm 1070	

**VA COVID-19 Response**

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- (b)(5)

**What should Veterans do if they believe they may have contracted the coronavirus?**

- (b)(5)
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**Fourth Mission**

- (b)(5)
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**From:** Powers, Pamela  
**Sent:** Sun, 1 Mar 2020 21:04:09 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** FW: Fwd: VHA Mission

FYI, Sir.

Pamela Powers  
VA Chief of Staff

---

**From:** Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Sunday, Mar 01, 2020, 3:57 PM  
**To:** Powers, Pamela <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: VHA Mission

Chief (s),  
FYI.

Larry Connell  
Chief of Staff

Veteran's Health Administration

(b)(6)@va.gov

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Sent:** Sunday, March 1, 2020 3:52:04 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>;

Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell,

Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D.

(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E.

(b)(6)@va.gov>; Carroll, William D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update: Limited distro due to some sensitive information

- Officials in Washington State and the CDC are tracking a possible outbreak of COVID-19 at a long-term care nursing facility in Washington State. There are currently two presumptive positive cases associated with the facility (one healthcare worker and one resident). Officials are also reporting that approximately 27 of the 108 residents and 25 of the 180 staff have some symptoms and are being tested.
- Japan has reported and confirmed the first patient to be re-infected with COVID-19 after showing signs of full recovery. The woman tested positive for the second time after testing positive in late January, she was released from the hospital on February 1 after recovering without any signs of the virus.

- HHS we are no longer in the containment phase, we are now in the community mitigation phase.
- The CDC is sending a team to help local officials investigate and test.
- The facility has been identified as Life Care Nursing Facility, 10101 NE 120st Kirkland, Washington - King County.

EMCC Actions:

- Palo Alto completed the dry run for receiving the Veteran patient on Sunday
- 24 additional employees will complete PPE training and fit testing today
- CDC test kits remain an issue and we have been on the phone throughout the day to shake them loose. We are being told the state Public Health labs have priority. I have communicated my displeasure with CDC particularly since we are receiving our first patient tomorrow and we continue to ask for kits and testing guidance.
- Preliminary search has indicated that VHA does not contract with the Washington State Nursing Home where cases have been reported. We are awaiting verification from V20
- Due to the admission of an active TB patient V8 may have a need for additional N95s, we are in the process of verifying that information and requirement.
- EMCC continues to push for a decision on the shelf life extension for N95s.

COVID-19 Patient Transfer:

- Conference call between Mercy Hospital System, Palo Alto VAMC and EMCC was conducted at 1:30 EST
- Patient arrived at Folsom Hospital on February 27<sup>th</sup>, his latest COVID-19 laboratory information will be shared with the VAMC once contact is made with CDC – numbers were exchanged. Folsom is not permitted to reveal lab results per CDC.
- Patient was described as a delight to care for and he is full ambulatory. When the patient arrived he run up the stairs and hospital personnel had to remind him to slow down.
- Patient has remained asymptomatic, normal labs, normal vitals. The patient does express a daily concern for his wife currently hospitalized in Japan.
- Contracted ambulance services will depart Travis AFB at 0700 on Monday, March 2, 2020. Expected arrival at Folsom Hospital is 0800.
- Constant communications will be maintained throughout the trip from Travis to ensure an exact arrival time at Folsom.
- Patient will be ready upon arrival of the contract ambulance.
- Physician to Physician contact information has been exchanged and contact will be maintained throughout the transfer.
- Arrival time at Palo Alto is unknown due to a number of variables.

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Sent:** Friday, February 28, 2020 6:57 PM

**To:** Kim, Paul D., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Carroll, William D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; MacDonald, Jennifer E. (Physician) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- The number of U.S. Citizens in the United States with confirmed cases of coronavirus is 61.
- HHS ASPR is having issues with the media targeting individuals using social media to contact officials in an attempt to obtain inside information concerning PPE contracts and supplies.
- HHS is requesting the virtual activation of the following LNOs:
  - ESF 1— Transportation
  - ESF 6 — Mass Care
  - ESF 13 — Public Safety
  - ESF 14 — Cross-Sector Business and Infrastructure
  - ESF 15 — External Affairs

EMCC Actions:

- All DEMPS personnel deployed to Travis AFB have returned home safely and the VHA mission there is complete.
- Requested NCA and VBA to participate in joint planning efforts for the Pandemic Base Plan and COVID-19 Annex.
- Distributed updated guidance from CDC on PUIs.
- The IT/Telework COVID-19 workgroup conducted their initial meeting. The workgroup's purpose is to develop plans, policy, procedures and identify any necessary equipment to support the ability of VHA to conduct a small to large telework operation in response to a COVID-19 outbreak.
- Workgroups completed draft information document concerning isolation gowns required for COVID-19, based on CDC and FDA documents.
- Workgroups produced Clinical Contact Center Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Screen Instructions, Actions, and Scripting v 2.0 27FEB2020.
- 23,278 unique visits to the forward-facing Public Health Website.
- Developing TTX for VHA leadership.
- Completed shift rotation of OEM field staff into the EMCC.
- Dr. Kim took a day off.

---

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 27, 2020 6:08 PM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D.

(b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) @va.gov>  
Cc: (b)(6) @va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; Bader, Christine E.  
(b)(6) @va.gov>; Carroll, William D. (b)(6) @va.gov>; MacDonald, Jennifer E.  
(Physician) (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Subject:** VHA Mission

Update:

- HHS – future transfer of asymptomatic positive patients to home isolation will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- One new positive at Travis transferred to hospital, 3 positives transferred to home isolation.
- HHS is working on a memo to DoD to extend operations at the three military bases.
- HHS is working on contact tracing for the patient admitted to UC Davis.
- HHS working on DEMOB plan for low-risk patients currently quarantined in Japan.
- ASPR asked if CDC is going to change the testing guidance “because the California cases was tested late.”

EMCC Actions:

- Due to notifications from suppliers the EMCC is developed and provided guidance on the proper use and type of gowns for treating/caring for COVID-19 patients.
- EMCC will conduct a nationwide conference call with VA Police to bring them up to speed on the COVID-19 response.
- Discussed PPE prioritization with HHS ASPR leadership. At this time HHS and the COVID-19 Task Force have not made any policy decisions that will drive prioritization, however one is expected as they review the needs. I provided the details of VHA’s request in writing – the ability to treat 5000 patients for 30 days.
- HHS ASPR leadership did reveal that the COVID-19 Task Force has crunched the numbers and if the worst case scenario develops the US will require 300 million N95s per month to sustain the healthcare system. The manufacturing capabilities to meet that demand does NOT exist.
- EMCC was made aware of the “possibility” of the San Antonio VAMC receiving repatriated Veterans. There are currently 15 identified Veterans – 9 have tested negative, 4 have refused testing, 1 is being re-tested due to an inconclusive result, 1 Veteran just revealed he is a Veteran and will undergo testing. HHS has not requested VAMC assistance at this time. The contact with the VAMC was through the OEM AEM asking the question, “can you accept a positive Veteran if needed”. I reminded the AEM to call the EMCC prior to any discussions with facilities so we can ensure 1) the Veteran is enrolled and eligible for care, 2) work out any details with HHS prior to involving the VAMC.
- ALL 6 Veteran enrollees at Travis have tested **negative!**
- HHS IMT has asked for Chaplain Services for the Veterans at Lackland – the request is for a 15-30 minute service by phone this weekend. The EMCC has placed the request and awaiting a response
- EMCC will participate on the VHA VA Police call and provide and bring all Chiefs up to date on the current VHA response tomorrow.
- EMCC is working on securing PPE for RCS and developing a shipment strategy.

- EMCC has made a request through WMC to meet with and brief the Unions of current VHA response plans and future scenarios should there be a worst case scenario.
- 25059 unique visits to the Public Health Website

Paul D. Kim, MD  
Director  
VHA Office of Emergency Management  
304-264-(b)(6) Office  
202-503-(b)(6) Cell

**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Mon, 9 Mar 2020 18:49:15 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** Canceled: COVID-19 Crisis Action Team  
**Importance:** High

**Please do Not Forward meeting invite.**



In support of ongoing Federal response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness will conduct daily Crisis Action Team meetings to ensure that the VA has a coordinated and organized response that supports the department's mission essential functions. Senior leaders and key decision makers.

**Principals and plus one are invited to attend the meeting in person. Principal will attend the meeting in the SCIF, and plus ones will attend the meeting in the VAIOC conference room. All others are encouraged to join via Skype.**

The agenda and meeting materials will be provided prior to the meeting.

[Join Skype Meeting](#)

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Join by phone

844-376-	(b)(6)	(East)	English (United States)
844-815-		(East)	English (United States)
844-770-		(East)	English (United States)

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Conference ID: (b)(6)

[Forgot your dial-in PIN?](#) | [Help](#)



V/R,

(b)(6)

**VA Integrated Operations Center (VA IOC) Watch Officer**

Office of Operations, Security & Preparedness

Department of Veterans Affairs

810 Vermont Av NW, Washington, DC 20420

Email: (b)(6)@va.gov SIPRNet: (b)(6)@dhs.gov

Tel: (202) 461-(b)(6) / (202) 219-(b)(6)

BB: (202) 497-(b)(6)

Fax: (202) 273-

**From:** Powers, Pamela  
**Sent:** Thu, 12 Mar 2020 00:34:01 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** Fwd: VA FY 2020 Coronavirus supplemental request  
**Attachments:** VBA coronavirus, 3-10-20.docx, Veterans Affairs COVID 19 Response Estimated Cost 3\_11\_2020 v4.xlsx, VHA COVID-19 Needs 3-11-20v2.xlsx

Sir, FYI. OM has been gathering requirements all week for the request. I think this is fair, although we will have to communicate why we need this when it was communicated in the hearing that we were ok. Things have changed for sure though.

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**From:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 7:52:50 PM  
**To:** Powers, Pamela <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Rychalski, Jon J. <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** VA FY 2020 Coronavirus supplemental request

All

The total VA supplemental request for coronavirus response is (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Details are in the attached word document and spreadsheet.

We will send this to OMB in the morning.

Jon—OIT came down to my office and explained the other lines we had questions about, so I added those back, bringing the total to (b)(5)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget  
Office of Management  
Department of Veterans Affairs

Desk 202-461-(b)(6)

Cell 202-763-

(b)(6)@va.gov



VBA

(b)(5)

Item	Cost	Assumptions
Hand Sanitizer	(b)(5)	
Disinfecting Wipes		
Anti-viral Face Tissue		
PIV Card Readers for CAG Teleworkers		
Monitors and Keyboards		
Custodial Services (Deep Cleaning)		
Total Cost for FY20	(b)(5)	

Best regards,

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Office of Financial Management  
Veterans Benefits Administration

202-461 (b)(6)

## Department of Veterans Affairs

### Estimated cost of Coronavirus Response, FY 2020 by account

VA Account	Dollars In Thousands
<b>Medical Care</b>	(b)(5)
Electronic Health Records Management	
Information Technology	
Veterans Benefits Administration	
Board of Veterans' Appeals	
National Cemetery Administration	
General Administration	
<b>VA Total</b>	

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)  
COVID-19 Response Future Cost Estimates By Appropriation  
As of March 11, 2020  
(\$ in Thousands)

Care For Veterans

Notes

Veterans Health Administration (VHA)

Coronavirus Test Kits

Hospital Costs

PPE

Emergency Care  
Urgent Care

Emergency Management Coordination  
Training

Public Affairs

Physical Security

Expanding Telehealth to More Patients  
Expanding Telehealth Capabilities to More  
Providers

Tele-ICU

Teleradiology

Total VHA

(b)(5)

Enabling Telehealth and Telework

Office of Information & Technology (OI&T)

Unified Communications

Telehealth & Telework End User Devices  
(laptops, software)

Network infrastructure, server storage,  
other

Contract and Government labor

Additional support for IT applications during  
user surge

Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-  
viral Face Tissue

Total IT

(b)(5)

Maintaining Employee Productivity

National Cemetery Administration (NCA)

Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-  
viral Face Tissue

Total NCA

(b)(5)

Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM)  
Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue

Total EHRM

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)  
PIV Card Readers for CAG Teleworkers  
Monitors and Keyboards  
Custodial Services (Deep Cleaning)  
Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue

Total VBA

(b)(5)

General Administration (Gen Ad)  
Office of Human Resources and Administration (HR&A) / Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness (OSP)

Overtime  
Cleaning Contracts

All Staff Offices  
Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue

Total Gen Ad

Board of Veterans Appeals (Board)  
Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue

Total Board

**Total Estimated Costs**

(b)(5)

(b)(5)



Department of Veterans Affairs  
 Office of Information and Technology  
 Corona Virus Impacts Mar 11 2020

Sum of Implementation Cost Total \$ (Itemize Tab 2)

OIT summary	ITOPS ADAS Categories	Total
Additional support for IT applications during user surge	Development Software	(b)(5)
Additional support for IT applications during user surge Total		
Contract and Government labor	labor contract	
	labor staff	
Contract and Government labor Total		
Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software)	desktop infrastructure	
	SW Licenses	
Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software) Total		
Network infrastructure, server storage, other	Miscellaneous	
	network infrastructure	
	server storage	
	WAN	
Network infrastructure, server storage, other Total		
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	
Unified Communications Total		
Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue	Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue	
Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue Total		
Grand Total		

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of Information and Technology  
Corona Virus Impacts Mar 11 2020

ITOPS ADAS Categories	OIT summary	IRP Category & Pillar	Description	Indicated Assumptions (ie. 100K more units)	Implementation Cost Total \$ (Itemize Tab 2)	Recurring Cost	Notes & POC
desktop infrastructure	Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software)	Desktop Infrastructure-EUO	Freight Charges -Costs for shipping devices and peripherals both individually to users and in bulk to facilities for distribution from the VA Central Imaging Distribution location	(b)(5)			
desktop infrastructure	Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software)	Desktop Infrastructure-EUO	Expanding Telehealth Capabilities to More Providers - End User Devices with Telehealth capability (Laptop, Docking Station, 2 Monitor, Webcam, Headset Package)				
desktop infrastructure	Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software)	Desktop Infrastructure-EUO	Increasing mobility and remote work opportunities for VA employees (Enterprise Wide) - End User Devices (Laptop, Docking Station, 2 Monitor, Package)				
desktop infrastructure	Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software)	Desktop Infrastructure-EUO	Equipment for Hardware Imaging Surge (@VA Distribution Warehouse) - This equipment will allow devices to be imaged at a central VA location for distribution to VA employees Enterprise wide				
desktop infrastructure	Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software)	Desktop Infrastructure-EUO	Item 2020-OPSVACO-4-20 that was pulled during CXO Exercise (This contract supports the staff that provide distribution services for devices in the VACD Area as well as devices being distributed across the enterprise)				
Miscellaneous	Network infrastructure, server storage, other	Printer Infrastructure - EUO	Small Desktop Printers for Emergency Distribution with telework equipment (estimated at 5% of new devices issued requiring access to desktop printer technology) - Supports VA Employees Enterprise Wide				
Miscellaneous	Network infrastructure, server storage, other	ECO/MISC/PLUM	\$500,000 in PLUM Cases to support emergency pop up clinics				
SW Licenses	Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software)	ECO	Telehealth Kiosk Software: Managing an increase in the use of Kiosk mode for veterans while remote would need the additional licenses requested.				
SW Licenses	Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software)	Desktop Infrastructure-EUO	Desktop/Laptop Required Software License Costs - Supports increase of devices to support all VA employees enterprise wide				
labor staff	Contract and Government labor	Desktop Infrastructure-EUO	Labor for Hardware Imaging Surge (@VA Distribution Warehouse) - This will allow devices to be imaged at a central VA location for distribution to VA employees Enterprise wide. (Labor cost to support imaging approx. 2,000 devices per day)				
labor staff	Contract and Government labor	Desktop Infrastructure-EUO	Labor for Supervisor coverage to support imaging Surge - FTE Staff Augmentation/OT				
labor contract	Contract and Government labor	Desktop Infrastructure-EUO	EUO Contractor Surge				
labor staff	Contract and Government labor	ECO/Labor	3 Million in labor for Enterprise service Desk (15 FTE at GS-11 and rest contract support). Service Desk would need an increase in staffing to support additional remote users.				
labor staff	Contract and Government labor	ECO/Labor	1 million in labor costs for ECC - DR/COOP team support services labor. The Command Center as well as DR/Coop would need additional resources to help with an increase in monitoring as well as emergency help for an increase in remote user support.				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Licensing and support of commercial software.	ID.me Licenses	(b)(5)			
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Software required to support new modes of care	Telehealth Management Platform Phase 3				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Software required to support new modes of care.	Veteran Appointment Online Scheduling (VAOS)				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Software required to support new modes of care.	Direct Secure Messaging				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Software required to support new modes of care.	Pharmacy Safety & MPDU Repair				

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of Information and Technology  
Corona Virus Impacts Mar 11 2020

ITOPS ADAS Categories	OIT summary	IRP Category & Pillar	Description	Indicated Assumptions (ie. 100K more units)	Implementation Cost Total \$ (Itemize Tab 2)	Recurring Cost	Notes & POC
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/increased stability and availability of critical systems	Joint Legacy Viewer	(b)(5)			
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Vista Schedule Enhance P2 App & Funct Modern				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Joint Legacy Viewer Sustainment				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Pharmacy Re-Engineer-PRE-Inbound ePrescribing				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Community Care (CC) Provider Profile Mgmt Sys				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Vista Maintenance-MandSUS-Part2				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	EnterpriseAppMTN- MandatorySUS-part1 (Vista)				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Community Care Care Coordination/cloud host				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Community Care (CC) Care Coordination SUS				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Community Care (CC) One Consult				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Laboratory (LSRP)-MandatorySUS				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	VEO - Voice Access Modernization (VAM) ES Technical Support - Interactive Voice Response system at call centers. Funding needed to maintain system and supply increase requests for claims.				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/licensing and support of commercial software	VEO - Voice Access Modernization VAM NICE Software - Funding needed for COT Software for call center.				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/licensing and support of commercial software	VEO - Voice Access Modernization VAM Nuance SW - Funding needed for COTS software for call center.				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/licensing and support of commercial software	VEO - VA Profile Pitney Bowes License - Funding needed for COTS software to ensure prescriptions go to correct veteran address.				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/Keep Critical Systems Running	Data Access Services (DAS) SW Maintenance Services for DAS - Funding needed for additional Maintenance Services to detect and fix bugs and issues quickly and maintain system availability. Provides data interface from external pharmacies to VAMCs; Corona patients will increase Prescriptions demand;				
Development Software	Additional support for IT applications during user surge	EPMO/reporting and data analytics	REACH VET/STORM/VINCI - BISL-This supports National Infectious Disease Service (NIOS) in analytical analysis of Coronavirus cases within the VA.		(b)(5)		
server storage	Network Infrastructure, server storage, other	IO/Server/Storage Farm Infrastructure	Augmentation of Critical Support Systems in CMOPS and upgraded server/network infrastructure to support increased Pharm surge - \$5M				
server storage	Network Infrastructure, server storage, other	IO/Server/Storage Farm Infrastructure	System Augmentation for existing aging Vista COTS server infrastructure for processing increased surge and speed - \$3M				
server storage	Network Infrastructure, server storage, other	IO/Server/Storage Farm Infrastructure	Emergent Vista Imaging Storage Augmentation due to possible increase storage needs for imaging and administrative documents = \$15M				
server storage	Network Infrastructure, server storage, other	IO/Server/Storage Farm Infrastructure	Possible need for additional hardware and software for Health/Benefit systems, i.e. Vista Systems, Imaging, COTS systems to support surge - \$10M				

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of Information and Technology  
Corona Virus Impacts Mar 11 2020

ITOPS ADAS Categories	OIT summary	IRP Category & Pillar	Description	Indicated Assumptions (ie. 100K more units)	Implementation Cost Total \$ (Itemize Tab 2)	Recurring Cost	Notes & POC
labor staff	Contract and Government labor	IO/Server/Storage Farm Infrastructure	(b)(5)		(b)(5)		
server storage	Network infrastructure, server storage, other	IO/Server/Storage Farm Infrastructure			(b)(5)		
server storage	Network infrastructure, server storage, other	IO/Server/Storage Farm Infrastructure			(b)(5)		
server storage	Network infrastructure, server storage, other	IO/Server/Storage Farm Infrastructure					
server storage	Network infrastructure, server storage, other	IO/Server/Storage Farm Infrastructure					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	IO/Unified Communications					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	IO/Unified Communications					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	IO/Unified Communications					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	IO/Unified Communications					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	IO/Unified Communications					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	IO/Unified Communications					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	SD/Unified Communications					
Miscellaneous	Network infrastructure, server storage, other	IO/Miscellaneous: printers, VSAT, Video, wireless			(b)(5)		
SW Licenses	Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (laptops, software)	Enterprise Command Operations	(b)(5)				
labor staff	Contract and Government labor	IO/Labor, staffing	(b)(5)				
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	IO/SD/Unified Communications					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	IO/SD/Unified Communications					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	IO/SD/Unified Communications					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	SD/Unified Communications	(b)(5)				

Department of Veterans Affairs  
 Office of Information and Technology  
 Corona Virus Impacts Mar 11 2020

ITOPS ADAS Categories	OIT summary	IRP Category & Pillar	Description	Indicated Assumptions (ie. 100K more units)	Implementation Cost Total \$ (Itemize Tab 2)	Recurring Cost	Notes & POC
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	SD/Unified Communications	(b)(5)		(b)(5)		
WAN	Network Infrastructure, server storage, other	WAN Internet Gateway Bandwidth	(b)(5)				
WAN	Network Infrastructure, server storage, other	WAN Bandwidth Capacity					
WAN	Network Infrastructure, server storage, other	VA RESCUE Support					
Unified Communications	Unified Communications	End User Smart Phones					
network infrastructure	Network Infrastructure, server storage, other	SD/Network Infrastructure					
		EUO/Network Infrastructure					
Miscellaneous	Network Infrastructure, server storage, other	SD/MISC/TELEHEALTH			(b)(5)		
SW Licenses	Telehealth & Telework End User Devices (Laptops, software)	SD/Software/ Recurring					
Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue	Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue	Hand Sanitizer, Disinfecting Wipes and Anti-viral Face Tissue			(b)(5)		
<b>Total</b>						(b)(5)	

### VBA Coronavirus Estimate

Item	Cost	Assumptions
Hand Sanitizer	(b)(5)	
Disinfecting Wipes		
Anti-viral Face Tissue		
PIV Card Readers for CAG Teleworkers		
Monitors and Keyboards		
Custodial Services (Deep Cleaning)		
<b>Total Cost for FY20</b>	<b>(b)(5)</b>	



Teleradiology

(b)(5)

**TOTAL VHA CORONA SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS**

\$  
\$

(b)(5)



**Hospital Costs**

- 4500 Patients
- Ventilators 1400 @ \$35K
- Alternate Sites of Care
- Equipment
- RA Services
- Consumables
- Overtime

**PPE**

- N95/ Isolation PPE
- PAPR
- Other PPE

**EMCC**

- Overtime
- Travel
- Fuel Response Vehicles
- Office Supplies

**Equipment Movement**

- C-Forts / Shipping

**Training**

- Materials
- Contracts
- Overtime

**Public Affairs**

- Printed
- Video
- Travel
- Website Development
- Overtime PAD

**Law Enforcement**

- Training
- Personnel (Additional)
- Overtime
- Equipment
- Physical Security

(b)(5)

Item	Unit Costs	Number	Medical Services Cost	Justification
------	------------	--------	-----------------------	---------------

**Expanding Telehealth to More Patients**

Patient Tablets (Full size iPads)  
+ Service, Case, MDM \$

Patient Tablets (iPads Minis) + Service,  
Case, MDM \$

iPad Sleeve Covers \$

**Peripheral Devices**

Stethoscopes \$

Pulse Oximeters \$

Thermometers \$

Blood Pressure Monitors \$

HT Monitoring IVR Service Fee \$

HT Modem Service fee

HT Modem Device Cost

**HT Peripherals**

Pulse Oximeters \$

Thermometers \$

Blood Pressure Monitors \$

**Expanding Telehealth Capabilities to More Providers**

Provider Tablets (iPads) \$

Webcams \$

Second Monitors \$

Speakers \$

Headsets \$

PIV Card Readers \$

Clinic Room Cart Covers (Plastic Cover) \$

Patient/Provider Facing Help Desk  
Support (Telehealth) Unit = 1month \$

Mobile Service Desk Help Support  
Unit+ 1 month \$

Annie Protocol Textmessaging Costs \$

Desktop Codecs (DX + 1 Yr Maintenance) \$

Total Examination Cameras \$

**Tele-ICU**

Tele-ICU Room Equipment + Technical  
Staff Cost (Unit = Room) \$

Tele-ICU Clinical Staff for ICU Bed  
Coverage \$

**Teleradiology**

National Teleradiology Program (NTP)  
Surge

Teleradiology PACS Workstation \$

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Item	Unit Costs	Number	Medical Services Cost	Justification
NTP Licenses			\$	(b)(5)
Personnel/OT			\$	
PACS Admin			\$	
Telework TeleRadiology				
PACS Workstation	(b)(5)			(b)(5)
PACS peripherals, mouse, microphone				
Diagnostic PACS Monitor				
Non-Diagnostic PACS Monitor				
<b>Totals</b>			\$	(b)(5)
ASSUMPTIONS:				(b)(5)

**Emergency Care**

**Urgent Care**

(b)(5)

**From:** Stone, Richard A., MD  
**Sent:** Sat, 14 Mar 2020 13:03:20 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** Re: Fwd: Previous email

Skye concurs with this approach. Thank you!

Rich

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**From:** RLW (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2020 9:01:00 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Fwd: Previous email

I will make that point today.

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
(www.blackberry.com)

---

**From:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Saturday, Mar 14, 2020, 9:00 AM  
**To:** RLW (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Fwd: Previous email

This will need to be a learning point for HHS. They will need to expect us to push back if the

(b)(5)

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**From:** RLW (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2020 8:56:25 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Fwd: Previous email

They just spent \$1.5 billion on the new University Medical Center on Canal Street.

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
(www.blackberry.com)

---

**From:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Saturday, Mar 14, 2020, 8:34 AM  
**To:** RLW (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Previous email

This is the data (below) for Louisiana public health (green). Not an overwhelmed public system at this point. Note the NOVA beds further down the page. Very few negative pressure beds (pink) at this VA site. We are working to convert beds to negative pressure if needed.

Rich

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**From:** (b)(6) (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2020 8:26 AM

**To:** Czarnecki, Tammy; Stone, Richard A., MD

**Cc:** Oshinski, Renee; Kim, Paul D., MD

**Subject:** RE: Previous email

For perspective purposes, here is the testing data for Louisiana (current as of yesterday morning). The table is from the Louisiana Department of Health's Daily Summary.

**Table 2: Louisiana Testing and Results**

Louisiana		Updated		3/13/20 at 0700	
Laboratory Testing					
	Number of Persons Under Investigation (PUI) Tests Negative	Number of Presumptive Positive Persons	CDC Confirmed Cases		
New Results (on 3/12)	23	20	0		
Cumulative Results (as of 3/13 700)	61	33	0		

Source: OPH Infectious Disease Epidemiology Section and OPH Laboratory

**From:** Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2020 8:04 AM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov>; Kim, Paul D., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: Previous email

I can send the information from the Bed Management System but we will still need to have the VISN validate.

Summary:

61 total available beds

Med/Surg: 26 available beds with (1) negative Pressure Room

ICU: 13 available beds with (0) negative Pressure Rooms

VI S I O N	S T A T E	FACI LITY N A M E	VI S I T A T I O N S	B E D S	B M S A C T I V E	% A C T I V E	B M S A C T I V E P R E S S U R E	B M S A V A I L P R E S S U R E	M E D I C A L S U R V A I L	% M E D I C A L	M E D I C A L P R E S S U R E	M E D I C A L P R E S S U R E	I C U A V A I L	% I C U A V A I L	I C U A V A I L P R E S S U R E	I C U A V A I L P R E S S U R E	
16	629	SOUTHERN LOUISIANA VETERANS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM	163	163	61	0.6257	8	1	73	64%	6	1	24	13	46%	2	0

**From:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2020 7:38 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Cc:** Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov; Kim, Paul D., MD (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Previous email

Renee  
 Thoughts from you or Sky? This is a underutilized facility.

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**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2020 7:35:52 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Cc:** Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov; Kim, Paul D., MD (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** RE: Previous email

We'll gather the information and get it to you.

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
([www.blackberry.com](http://www.blackberry.com))

---

**From:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Saturday, Mar 14, 2020, 7:26 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Cc:** Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Kim, Paul D., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Previous email

What is the capacity of NOVA if the Secretary agrees?

Number of available ICU, negative pressure and isolation beds?

Rich

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---

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2020 7:22:24 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Kim, Paul D., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Previous email

Spot on sir. We're receiving requests from State and locals directly at this time and late last night, the State of Louisiana sent a request through HHS to use the New Orleans VAMC as a surge hospital for COVID-19 patients.

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
([www.blackberry.com](http://www.blackberry.com))

---

**From:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Saturday, Mar 14, 2020, 7:06 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** Previous email

(b)(6)

Did I get this correct in what I sent to the Secretary?

Rich

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**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Sat, 14 Mar 2020 14:06:50 +0000  
**To:** Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO;Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO;Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO;Reeves, Randy;Ratchford Jr, Lewis;Tucker, Brooks;Glynn, Melissa S.;Rychalski, Jon J.;Mason, Cheryl;Lapuz, Miguel H.;Wiggins, Leslie B.;Gigliotti, Ralph;Missal, Michael J. (OIG);Davis, Lynda;Stone, Richard A., MD;Christy, Phillip (SES);Jackson, Frederick R.;Powers, Pamela;RLW;Hipolit, Richard (OGC);Sitterly, Daniel;Gfrerer, James;Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP);Elizalde, David A.;Hutton, James (b)(6) DM;Bader, Christine E.;Smith, Jeffrey M.;Mayo, Jeffrey;Hudson, William A. (OGC);Mashburn, John K (b)(6) (OIG (b)(6) Huweart, Eric D.; (b)(6) CFM) (b)(6)  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** SECVA Weekend Summary Report for March 14, 2020  
**Attachments:** 14 March 20 (Final).pdf, USG COVID-19 Response Plan, 13 Mar 20.pdf



Good Morning,

The current SECVA Weekend-Summary Report is below.

National Terror Advisory System	COGCON	Baseline Force Protection Condition		
		NORTHCOM	EUCOM	PACOM
(b)(7)(E)				

1. **Executive Summary**

- Monitoring Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

2. **Significant Weather** *Source: NWS*

- Storm systems across the western U.S. will continue to bring heavy rainfall to portions of the Southwest Desert today, with heavy snow continuing across many mountainous areas through the weekend.
- Heavy snow is also possible across the Central Plains into Saturday, with a few severe thunderstorms possible across West Texas and Eastern New Mexico.

3. **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)** *Source: HHS, CDC, WHO, DHS, VHA, VBA*

- On 14 Mar, the WHO reports 142,320 confirmed cases globally; 5,388 deaths.
- On 13 Mar, CDC reported the total U.S. cases is 1,629 with 41 deaths.

- POTUS declared a National Emergency under the Stafford Act for COVID-19; provides \$50 billion in federal funding.
- The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published the U.S. Government COVID-19 Response Plan, dated 13 Mar; adapted from the 2018 Pandemic Crisis Action Plan. VPOTUS will lead government efforts with HHS serving as the Lead Federal Agency.
- Military Health System has reported nine confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 positive cases, including four Active Duty Service members in South Korea.
- 13 of 16 DoD laboratories slated to receive diagnostic testing kits from CDC; approved to conduct testing.
- NY, MD, and Puerto Rico have activated their National Guard in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. As part of the COVID-19 national response, the Department of Defense deployed 1,000 National Guard troops across six states to assist with logistical support, disinfection procedures, and transportation of medical personnel.
- CA, CO, CT, WA instituting drive-through COVID-19 testing. The White House announced drive through testing at Walgreens, CVS, Walmart, Target and other locations nationwide.

#### **VA Response Efforts**

- VHA reports experiencing bandwidth issues and would like to explore how operations can be staggered; OEI will lead a task force to explore this and develop a policy to support it.
- OIT is analyzing user capacity, procurements, and licensing for 300,000 additional teleworkers.
- OPIA has been tasked to work with VHA to produce a letter to state governors explaining the process of opening VA medical centers to non-Veterans.
- Grand Princess Cruise Ship Update – All passengers are now off of the ship
  - Travis: 121 self-identified veterans
  - Miramar: 15 self-identified veterans
  - Lackland: 28 self-identified veterans
  - Dobbins: 4 self-identified veterans

#### **4. Long Term Facility Disruptions**

- **Blythe CBOC, CA** *Source: VHA*
  - Estimated date of completion is the end of March.
  - On 30 Nov, the CBOC sustained extensive water damage from heavy rains.
  - An onsite MVC and telehealth capabilities are being used for care.
- **Arecibo CBOC, PR** *Source: VHA*
  - Operating from offices on the premises of the Manuel Petaca Iguina Coliseum.
- **Vieques Rural OPC, PR** *Source: VHA*
  - Operating from a PR Department of Health temporary clinical at Las Maria.
  - Preliminary occupancy date for the long-term lease replacement is June 20.

#### **5. Ten Day Outlook**

- **20 Mar – 12 Apr: National Cherry Blossom Festival, Washington, DC (SEAR 3)**

- The festival spans four weeks, over 1.5 million people are expected to attend the events.
- The parade is 4 Apr; the route extends from 7<sup>th</sup> St to 17<sup>th</sup> St on Constitution Ave.
- Several of the festival's events have been cancelled in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Approved by: (b)(6) Duty Officer  
Released by: (b)(6), Watch Officer

V/R,

(b)(6)

VA Integrated Operations Center

Email: (b)(6)@va.gov

SIPRNet: (b)(6)@dhs.sgov.gov

Tel: (202) 461-(b)(6) / (202) 219-(b)(6)

Mobile: (202) 497-(b)(6)

Fax: (202) 273-(b)(6)

# Department of Veterans Affairs

## Secretary Stand-Up Report

March 14, 2020

National Terror Advisory System	COGCON	Baseline Force Protection Condition		
		NORTHCOM	EUCOM	PACOM
(b)(7)(E)				

### 1. Executive Summary

- Monitoring Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

### 2. Significant Weather *Source: NWS*

- Storm systems across the western U.S. will continue to bring heavy rainfall to portions of the Desert Southwest today, with heavy snow continuing across many mountainous areas through the weekend.
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  - Miramar: 15 self-identified veterans
  - Lackland: 28 self-identified veterans
  - Dobbins: 4 self-identified veterans

### 4. Long Term Facility Disruptions

- **Blythe CBOC, CA** *Source: VHA*
  - Estimated date of completion is the end of March.

# Department of Veterans Affairs

## Secretary Stand-Up Report

---

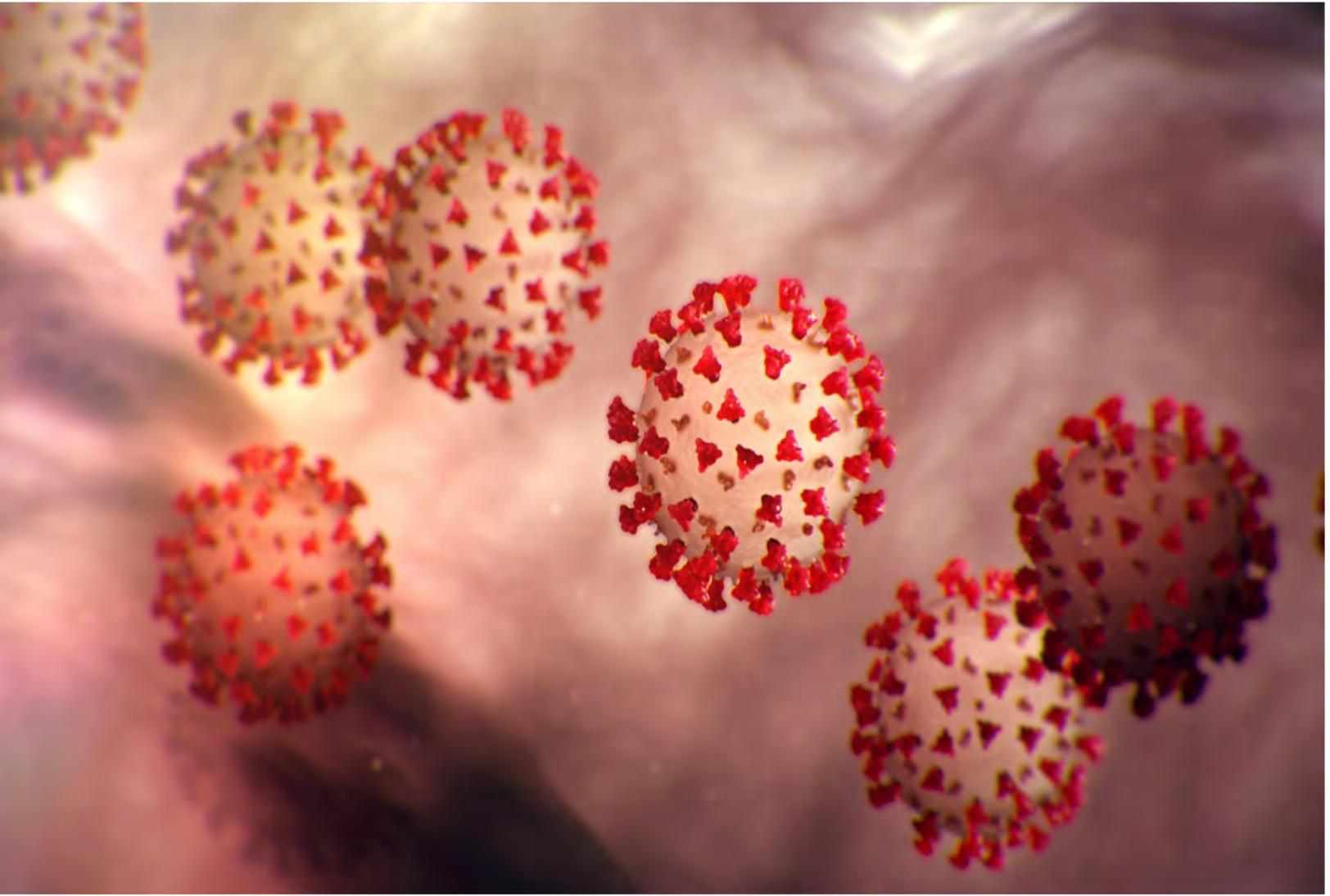
**March 14, 2020**

- On 30 Nov, the CBOC sustained extensive water damage from heavy rains.
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- **Arecibo CBOC, PR** *Source: VHA*
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  - Several of the festival's events have been cancelled in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Approved by (b)(6) Duty Officer  
Released by  Watch Officer



*PanCAP Adapted*

# U.S. Government COVID-19 Response Plan

March 13, 2020



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MULTI-VA-20-0470-A-000081

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**From:** Powers, Pamela  
**Sent:** Sun, 15 Mar 2020 19:09:13 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** Fwd: SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 15 Mar 20  
**Attachments:** Coronavirus(COVID-19)\_Placemat\_03152020.pdf, Coronavirus Impacts - New Rochelle.pdf

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**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2020 3:08:55 PM  
**To:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 15 Mar 20

---

**From:** VAIOC <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2020 12:05 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov>; Powers, Pamela (b)(6)@va.gov> (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; Witkin, Maxanne R. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Harvey, Ruby  
(b)(6)@va.gov> (b)(6)@va.gov>; Hayes-Byrd, Jacquelyn  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov> (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@va.gov> (b)(6)@va.gov>; Mason, Cheryl  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; Hudson, William A. (OGC) (b)(6)@va.gov>; Stone, Richard A., MD  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Davis, Lynda  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; Reeves, Randy (b)(6)@va.gov>; Missal, Michael J. (OIG)  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP) (b)(6)@va.gov>; Hutton, James  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; Brazell, Karen (b)(6)@va.gov>; Rychalski, Jon J.  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; Gfrerer, James (b)(6)@va.gov>; Sitterly, Daniel  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; Glynn, Melissa S. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Tucker, Brooks  
(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 15 Mar 20

ALCON,

For your situational awareness attached is the SECVA Daily COVID-19 Placemat.

- [The authoritative source for the U.S. cases is the Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\), last update was 13 Mar 20.](#)

Approved by: (b)(6) Duty Officer

Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

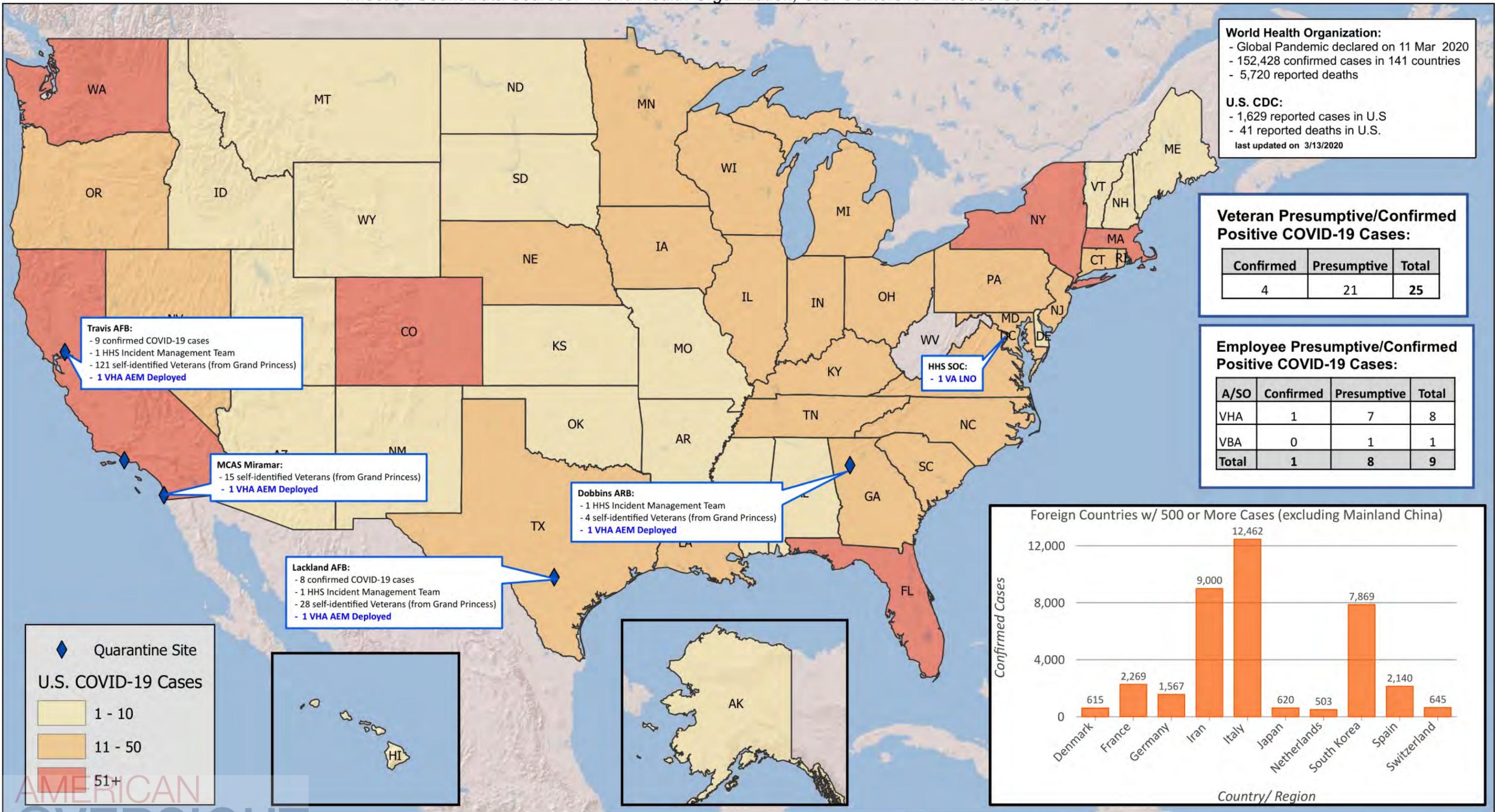
VA Integrated Operations Center

Email: (b)(6)@va.gov  
Classified Email: (b)(6)@dhs.gov  
Tel: (202) 461-(b)(6) / (202) 219-(b)(6)  
Mobile: (202) 497-(b)(6)  
Fax: (202) 273-(b)(6)



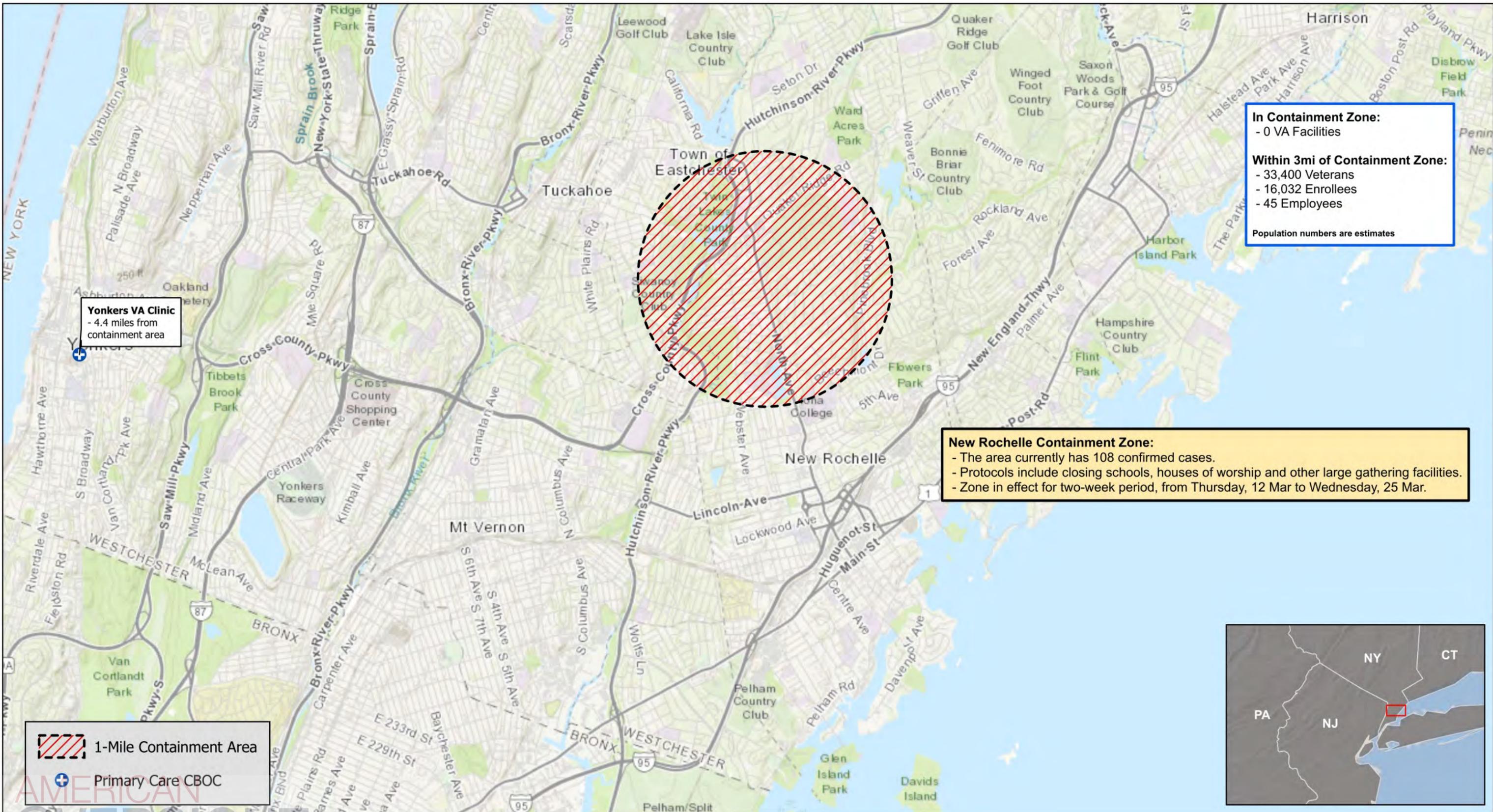
# Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts - 3/15/2020 as of 1100

Infection Count Data Sources: World Health Organization, U.S. Centers for Disease Control





# COVID-19 New Rochelle, NY Containment Area- 3/15/2020



**From:** Powers, Pamela  
**Sent:** Sun, 15 Mar 2020 19:10:50 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** Re: Fwd: SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 15 Mar 20

Yes sir. I don't think they sent them. Will make sure they do so going forward.

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**From:** RLW (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2020 3:10:12 PM  
**To:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Fwd: SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 15 Mar 20

I had these but they are not a rundown of our operations

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
(www.blackberry.com)

---

**From:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Sunday, Mar 15, 2020, 3:09 PM  
**To:** RLW (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 15 Mar 20

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**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2020 3:08:55 PM  
**To:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 15 Mar 20

---

**From:** VAIOC (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2020 12:05 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov>; Powers, Pamela (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Witkin, Maxanne R. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Harvey, Ruby (b)(6)@va.gov>; Hayes-Byrd, Jacquelyn (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Mason, Cheryl (b)(6)@va.gov>; Hudson, William A. (OGC) (b)(6)@va.gov>; Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACC (b)(6)@va.gov>; Davis, Lynda (b)(6)@va.gov>; Reeves, Randy (b)(6)@va.gov>; Missal, Michael J. (OIG) (b)(6)@va.gov>; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP) (b)(6)@va.gov>; Hutton, James (b)(6)@va.gov>; Brazell, Karen (b)(6)@va.gov>; Rychalski, Jon J. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Gfrerer, James (b)(6)@va.gov>; Sitterly, Daniel (b)(6)@va.gov>; Glynn, Melissa S. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Tucker, Brooks (b)(6)@va.gov>

(b)(6)@va.gov>

Cc: Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>

Subject: SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 15 Mar 20

ALCON,

For your situational awareness attached is the SECVA Daily COVID-19 Placemat.

- The authoritative source for the U.S. cases is the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), last update was 13 Mar 20.

Approved by: (b)(6) Duty Officer

Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

VA Integrated Operations Center

Email (b)(6)@va.gov

Classified Email: (b)(6)@dhs.sgov.gov

Tel: (202) 461-(b)(6) / (202) 219-(b)(6)

Mobile: (202) 497-(b)(6)

Fax: (202) 273-(b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Sun, 22 Mar 2020 17:09:28 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** FW: SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 22 Mar 20  
**Attachments:** Coronavirus(COVID-19)\_Placemat\_03222020.pdf, Coronavirus(COVID-19)\_Employee\_Placemat\_03222020.pdf

Trying to get these printed for you. Thanks.

(b)(6)

**From:** VAIOC (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 22, 2020 12:52 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov; Powers, Pamela (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Witkin, Maxanne R. (b)(6)@va.gov; Harvey, Ruby (b)(6)@va.gov; Hayes-Byrd, Jacquelyn (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Mason, Cheryl (b)(6)@va.gov; Hudson, William A. (OGC) (b)(6)@va.gov; Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov; Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO (b)(6)@va.gov; Davis, Lynda (b)(6)@va.gov; Reeves, Randy (b)(6)@va.gov; Missal, Michael J. (OIG) (b)(6)@va.gov; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP) (b)(6)@va.gov; Hutton, James (b)(6)@va.gov; Brazell, Karen (b)(6)@va.gov; Rychalski, Jon J. (b)(6)@va.gov; Gfrerer, James (b)(6)@va.gov; Sitterly, Daniel (b)(6)@va.gov; Glynn, Melissa S. (b)(6)@va.gov; Tucker, Brooks (b)(6)@va.gov; Tran, Dat VACO (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Cc:** Ratchford Jr, Lewis (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** SECVA COVID-19 Placemat 22 Mar 20

ALCON,

For your situational awareness attached are the updated SECVA Daily COVID-19 Placemats.

Approved by: (b)(6) Duty Officer

Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

V/R  
Michielle Henderson  
VA Integrated Operations Center  
Email: (b)(6)@va.gov  
Classified Email: (b)(6)@dhs.sgov.gov

Tel: (202) 461-(b)(6) (202) 219-(b)(6)  
Mobile: (202) 497-(b)(6)  
Fax: (202) 273-(b)(6)





# Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts - 3/22/2020 as of 1200

Infection Count Data Sources: World Health Organization, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

**World Health Organization:**

- Global Pandemic declared on 11 Mar 2020
- 267,013 confirmed cases in 184 countries
- 11,201 reported deaths

**Department of Health and Human Services:**

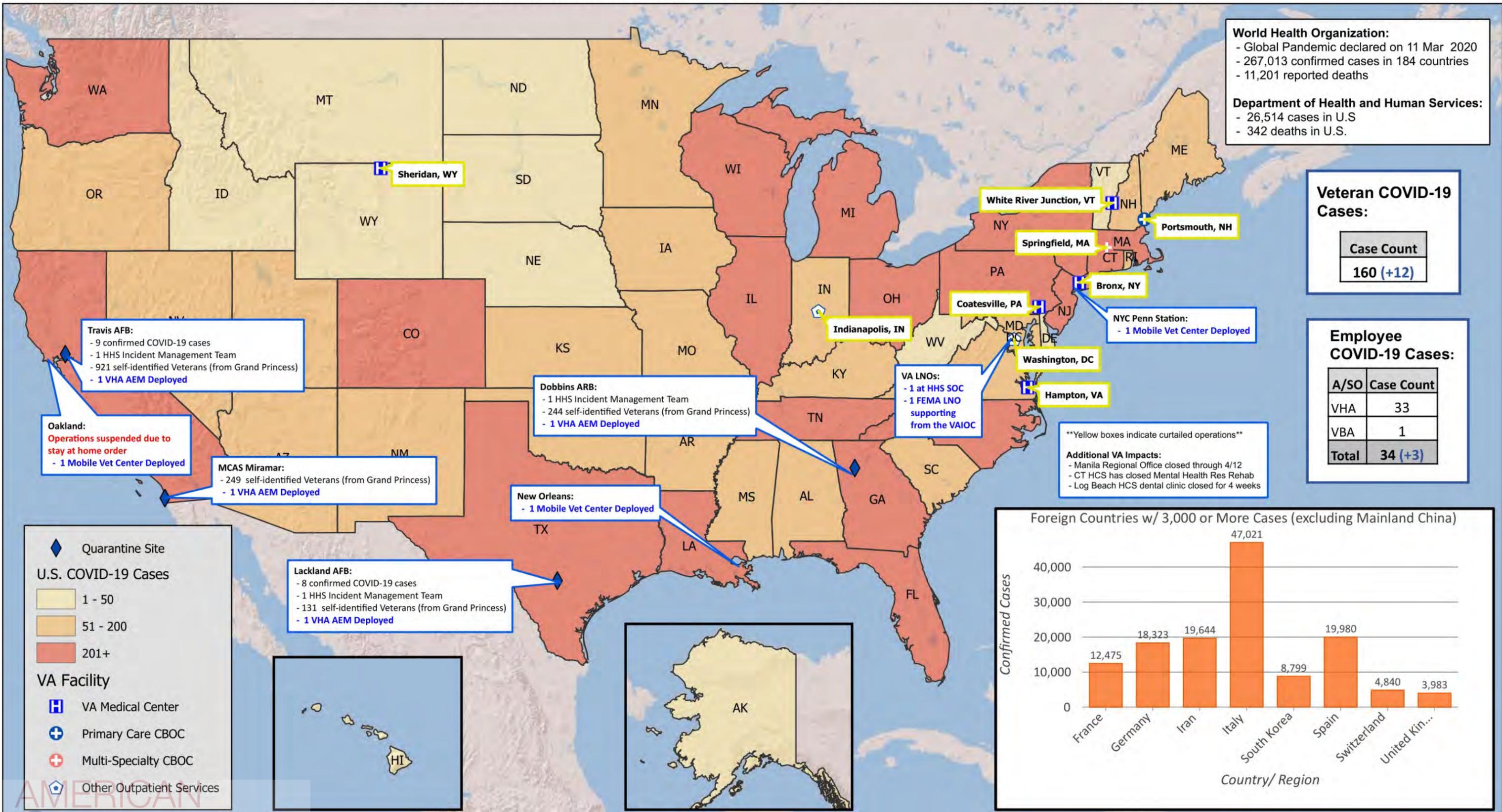
- 26,514 cases in U.S.
- 342 deaths in U.S.

### Veteran COVID-19 Cases:

Case Count
160 (+12)

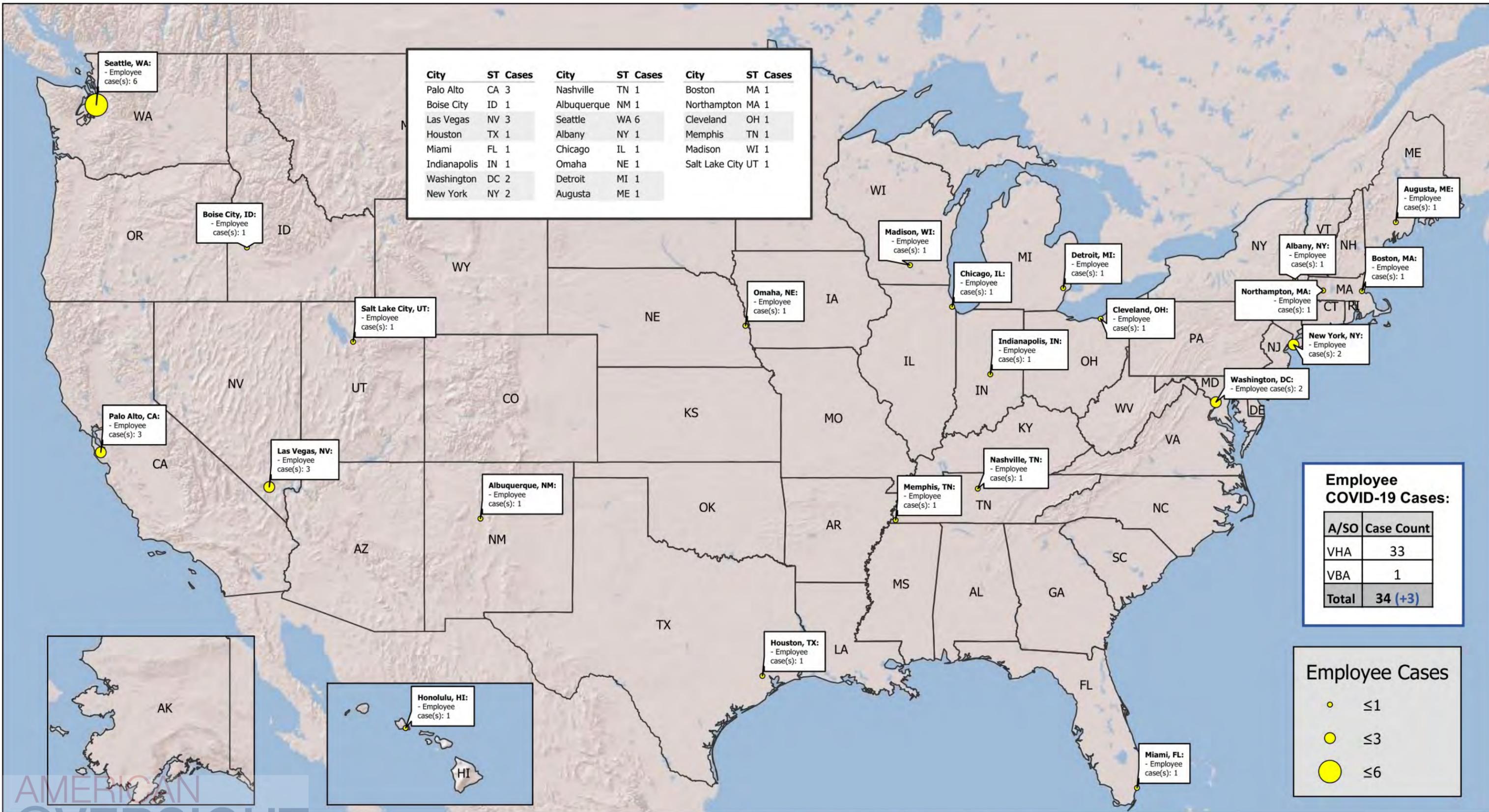
### Employee COVID-19 Cases:

A/SO	Case Count
VHA	33
VBA	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34 (+3)</b>





# VA Employees with COVID-19 - 3/22/2020 as of 1100



**From:** Powers, Pamela  
**Sent:** Sat, 21 Mar 2020 19:19:26 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** FW: Additional Trial Sites for Clinical Trials

FYSA. This is good news.

---

**From:** (b)(6) EOP/WHO (b)(6) who.eop.gov>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 21, 2020 2:09 PM  
**To:** (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6) va.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/WHO (b)(6) who.eop.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Additional Trial Sites for Clinical Trials

(b)(6)

DPC is working with NIH to ensure that clinical trials and enrollment are (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Are you available for a call today to discuss?

Thank you for all VA is already doing.

(b)(6)

Special Assistant to the President  
Domestic Policy Council  
The White House

---

**From:** (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2020 2:16 PM  
**To:** (b)(6) EOP/WHO <(b)(6) who.eop.gov>  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/WHO (b)(6) who.eop.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Additional Trial Sites for Clinical Trials

Got it (b)(6) I will ramp my people up now and get back to you.

(b)(6)

VHA DCOS  
W: 202-461 (b)(6)  
C: 202-769 (b)(6)  
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---

**From:** (b)(6) EOP/WHO (b)(6) <(b)(6)@who.eop.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2020 2:14 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6) EOP/WHO  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Additional Trial Sites for Clinical Trials

(b)(6)

I just tried to ring.

DPC is WH lead on therapeutics and vaccines supply line (b)(6)

Thanks for getting me in touch with your staff on Tuesday.

We're noticing a (b)(5)

(b)(5)

We are standing by to help with HHS/NIH/etc.

Best,

-----  
(b)(6)

Special Assistant to the President  
Domestic Policy Council  
O: 202-395 (b)(6)  
C: 202-881 (b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Sat, 21 Mar 2020 19:32:22 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparation Call-Daily at 3:30 PM EST  
**Attachments:** COVID19 All VISNs 03212020.pptx

Did you want to call in to this todsey?

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**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 21, 2020 3:23:43 PM  
**To:** Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov; Kramer, Deborah E. (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; VHA VISN Directors (b)(6)@va.gov; VHA USH Meeting Requests (b)(6)@va.gov; VHA HOC Action (b)(6)@va.gov; VHA VISN DNDs <(b)(6)@va.gov>; VHA VISN Planners (b)(6)@va.gov; Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Bader, Christine E. (b)(6)@va.gov; Kim, Paul D., MD (b)(6)@va.gov; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6) (HEFPNA5B) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lynch, Thomas (VHA) (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Upton, Mark T. (b)(6)@va.gov; MacDonald, Jennifer E. (Physician) (b)(6)@va.gov; Matthews, Kameron (b)(6)@va.gov; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov; VISN Support Team 3 (b)(6)@va.gov; VISN Support Team 2 (b)(6)@va.gov; VISN Support Team 1 <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bonjorni, Jessica (WMC) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) (WMC) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov; Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Galpin, Kevin MD (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Christy, Phillip (SES) (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Scher, Deborah L. (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov

**Cc:** VHA CO 10N Support Staff <(b)(6)>

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

**Subject:** RE: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparation Call-Daily at 3:30 PM EST

Good afternoon,  
Attached is the slide deck that will be utilized for today's COVID-19 Weekend Update Briefing.

Thank you.

V/r,

(b)(6)

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 5, 2020 8:31 AM

**To:** Oshinski, Renee; Kramer, Deborah E.; (b)(6) VHA VISN Directors; VHA USH Meeting Requests; VHA HOC Action; VHA VISN DNDs; VHA VISN Planners; Boyd, Teresa D (b)(6) Bader, Christine E.; Kim, Paul D., MD; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6) (HEFPNA5B); Lynch, Thomas (VHA); (b)(6) Upton, Mark T.; MacDonald, Jennifer E. (Physician); Matthews, Kameron; Czarnecki, Tammy; VISN Support Team 3; VISN Support Team 2; VISN Support Team 1; Bonjorni, Jessica (WMC); (b)(6) (WMC); (b)(6); Stone, Richard A., MD; Connell, Lawrence B.; Lieberman, Steve (b)(6) M.; Galpin, Kevin MD; (b)(6) Christy, Phillip (SES); (b)(6)

(b)(6) Scher, Deborah L.; (b)(6)  
**Cc:** VHA CO 10N Support Staff; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)



(b)(6)

**Subject:** Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparation Call-Daily at 3:30 PM EST

**When:** Saturday, March 21, 2020 3:30 PM-4:30 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

**Where:** (800) 767-(b)(6) Code (b)(6)

Good Afternoon Network Directors,

The Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management, Renee Oshinski, will host the Coronavirus preparation call by VANTS line only. Please call (800) 767-(b)(6) Code (b)(6) to access the call.

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Thank you for your support

# COVID-19 VHA Update Briefing

3/21/2020



**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

Predecisional / For Internal VA Use Only

MULTI-VA-20-0470-A-0009101

# Agenda

- Summary Cases  
VISN Reports  
Confirmed Cases  
Persons Under Investigation  
Critical Supply Shortages  
Unanticipated Curtailments

# Confirmed Cases

## Summary:

Row Labels	Count of IB
Employee	33
Community Hospital	1
Quarantined Home	32
Veteran	160
CLC, Community Hospital	1
Community Hospital	2
Deceased	2
Discharged, Quarantined Home	2
Quarantined Home	109
VA Inpatient, Acute Care	26
VA Inpatient, ICU	18
Grand Total	193

## Veterans

Patient Status - Veteran	Total	Change
Grand Total	160	+14
VA Inpatient, ICU	18	-
VA Inpatient, Acute Care	26	+1
Quarantined Home	109	+11
Discharged, Quarantined Home	2	-
Deceased	2	-
Community Hospital	2	+2
CLC, Community Hospital	1	

## Employees

Patient Status - Employee	Total	Change
Grand Total	33	+4
Quarantined Home	32	+4
Community Hospital	1	

As of 3/21/2020, 0900am Eastern

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Sat, 21 Mar 2020 19:34:34 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** Re: Fwd: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparation Call-Daily at 3:30 PM EST

Ok. Still on the call?

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**From:** RLW (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 21, 2020 3:34:04 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Fwd: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparation Call-Daily at 3:30 PM EST

I will miss it

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
(www.blackberry.com)

---

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Saturday, Mar 21, 2020, 3:32 PM  
**To:** RLW <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparation Call-Daily at 3:30 PM EST

Did you want to call in to this todsy?

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 21, 2020 3:23:43 PM  
**To:** Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov>; Kramer, Deborah E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; VHA VISN Directors (b)(6)@va.gov>; VHA USH Meeting Requests (b)(6)@va.gov>; VHA HOC Action <(b)(6)@va.gov>; VHA VISN DNDs (b)(6)@va.gov>; VHA VISN Planners (b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Kim, Paul D., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Lynch, Thomas (VHA) (b)(6)@va.gov>; Upton, Mark T. (b)(6)@va.gov>; MacDonald, Jennifer E. (Physician) (b)(6)@va.gov>; Matthews, Kameron (b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov>; VISN Support Team 3 (b)(6)@va.gov>; VISN Support Team 2 (b)(6)@va.gov>; VISN Support Team 1 (b)(6)@va.gov>; Bonjorni, Jessica (WMC) (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steve (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Galpin, Kevin MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Christy, Phillip (SES) (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Scher, Deborah L. (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>

<(b)(6)>@va.gov

Cc: VHA CO 10N Support Staff (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

**Subject:** RE: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparation Call-Daily at 3:30 PM EST

Good afternoon,

Attached is the slide deck that will be utilized for today's COVID-19 Weekend Update Briefing.

Thank you.

V/r,

(b)(6)

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 5, 2020 8:31 AM

**To:** Oshinski, Renee; Kramer, Deborah E.; (b)(6) VHA VISN Directors; VHA USH Meeting Requests; VHA HOC Action; VHA VISN DNDs; VHA VISN Planners; Boyd, Teresa D.; (b)(6) Bader, Christine E.; Kim, Paul D., MD; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6) HEFPNA5B); Lynch, Thomas (VHA); (b)(6) Upton, Mark T.; MacDonald, Jennifer E. (Physician); Matthews, Kameron; Czarnecki, Tammy; VISN Support Team 3; VISN Support Team 2; VISN Support Team 1; Bonjorni, Jessica (WMC); (b)(6) (WMC); (b)(6) Stone, Richard A., MD; Connell, Lawrence B.; Lieberman, Steven; (b)(6) Galpin, Kevin MD; (b)(6) hristy, Phillip (SES); (b)(6) (b)(6); Scher, Deborah L. (b)(6)  
**Cc:** VHA CO 10N Support Staff (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)



(b)(6)

(b)(6)

**Subject:** Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparation Call-Daily at 3:30 PM EST

**When:** Saturday, March 21, 2020 3:30 PM-4:30 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

**Where:** (800) 767-(b)(6) Code (b)(6)

Good Afternoon Network Directors,

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### [Join Skype Meeting](#)

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Thank you for your support.

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Fri, 21 Feb 2020 18:45:36 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** FW: Materials for WHTF meeting tomorrow  
**Attachments:** (FOUO) COVID 19 Response TTX SitMan\_20Feb\_1400\_White House Task Force.docx, Transmission - Severity - Mitigation Graphs.pptx, (FOUO) COVID 19 Response TTX Placemat\_20Feb2020\_1830.pptx, USG\_Response to SARSCoV2\_20 Feb\_FINAL.docx, WHTF Framework Decision Tree\_V6FINAL.pptx

Sir – FYI for today from 3:00-5:00pm in the Sit Room. Not sure if you'll see this or not, but thought I'd pass on. Thank you.

(b)(6)

---

**From:** (b)(6) EOP/NSC (b)(6)@nsc.eop.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, February 21, 2020 1:32 PM  
**To:** Powers, Pame (b)(6)@va.gov (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Materials for WHTF meeting tomorrow

Hi All,

I am in the process of getting you both added to meeting invitations, but we wanted to offer an invitation to Secretary Wilkie for a TTX on Coronavirus today in the Situation Room from 3:00-5:00pm. Please let me know as soon as possible if he would like to join.

Best,

(b)(6)

---

**From:** (b)(6) EOP/NSC (b)(6)@nsc.eop.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2020 10:25 PM  
**To:** DL NSC Defens (b)(6)@whmo.mil>; DL NSC Legal (b)(6)@whmo.mil>; DL NSC NSA FO Staff (b)(6)@whmo.mil>; DL NSC STRATCOM (b)(6)@whmo.mil>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

[Large redacted area]

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

**Subject:** Fw: materials for WHRF meeting tomorrow

Dear PCC Colleagues,

FYSA and in order to prepare your principles and colleagues for the meeting tomorrow, please find attached the read ahead materials for the WHRF meeting tomorrow.

Best,

(b)(6)

(b)(6) PhD, MS  
Director for Countering Biological Threats  
National Security Council  
202.456.(b)(6) O) 202.881.(b)(6) cell)  
(b)(6) @nsc.eop.gov

---

**From:** (b)(6) EOP/NSC  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2020 10:13 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

**Subject:** Materials for WHTF meeting tomorrow

Good Evening WHTF,

Please find attached read ahead documents for the meeting tomorrow that will focus on a discussion and TTX regarding triggers and our phased response.

Best Regards,

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

PhD, MS

Director for Countering Biological Threats

National Security Council

202.456 (b)(6) (O) 202.881 (b)(6) II)

(b)(6) @nsc.eop.gov



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE**

**CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 RESPONSE TABLETOP  
EXERCISE  
SITUATION MANUAL**

**FEBRUARY 20, 2020**

**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**



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Section 2: Exercise Scenarios .....6  
Section 3: Discussion Questions .....11



**U.S. Government Response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV2)**

**Current Posture- Containment**

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

**Aggressive Containment**

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

**Transitioning from Containment to Federal Recommendation for Community Mitigation Efforts in Affected Jurisdictions**

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

[Redacted content]

(b)(5)

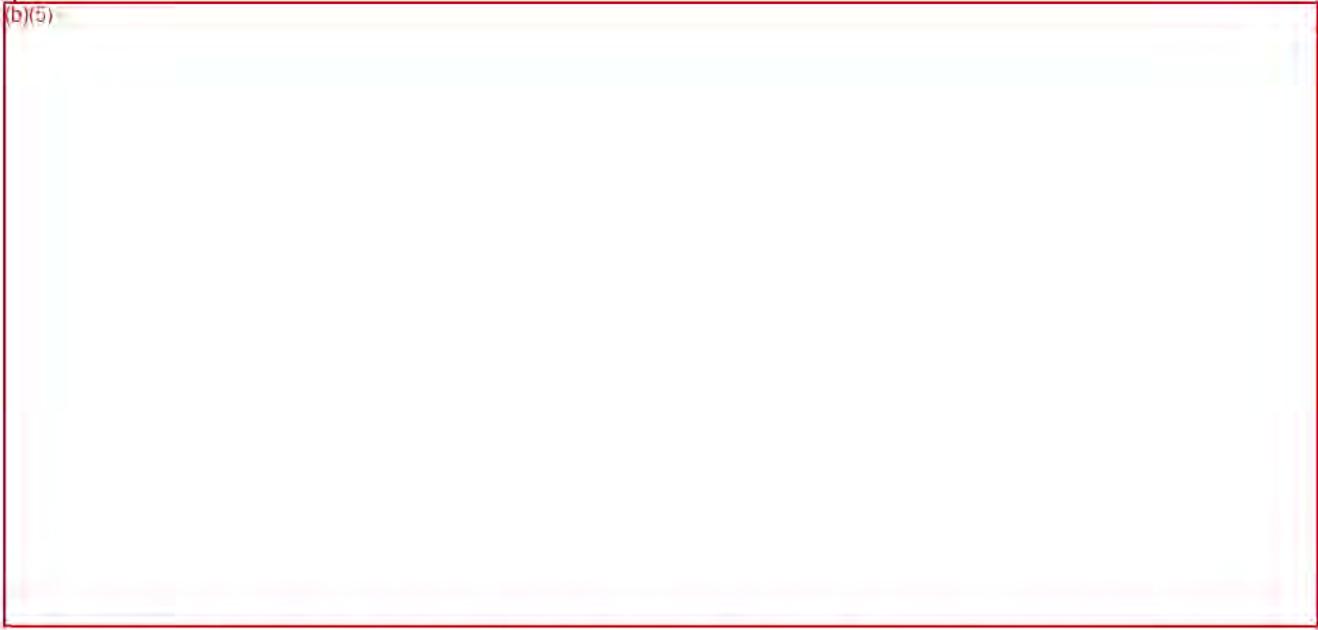
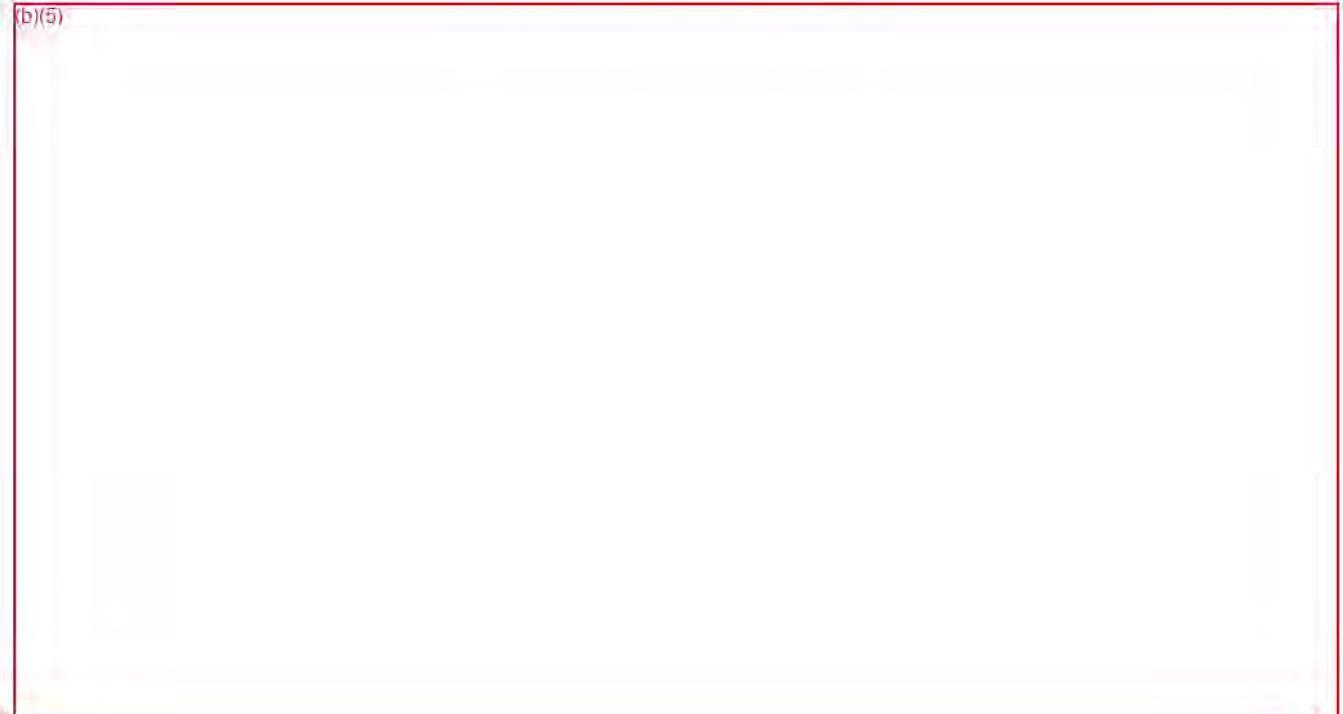
[Redacted content]

**Transitioning from Containment to Federal Recommendation for Community Mitigation Efforts in Jurisdictions Across the Nation**

(b)(5)

[Redacted content]

(b)(5)



**Preparing for Future Epidemic Trends – Striking Balance Between Mitigation and Containment**

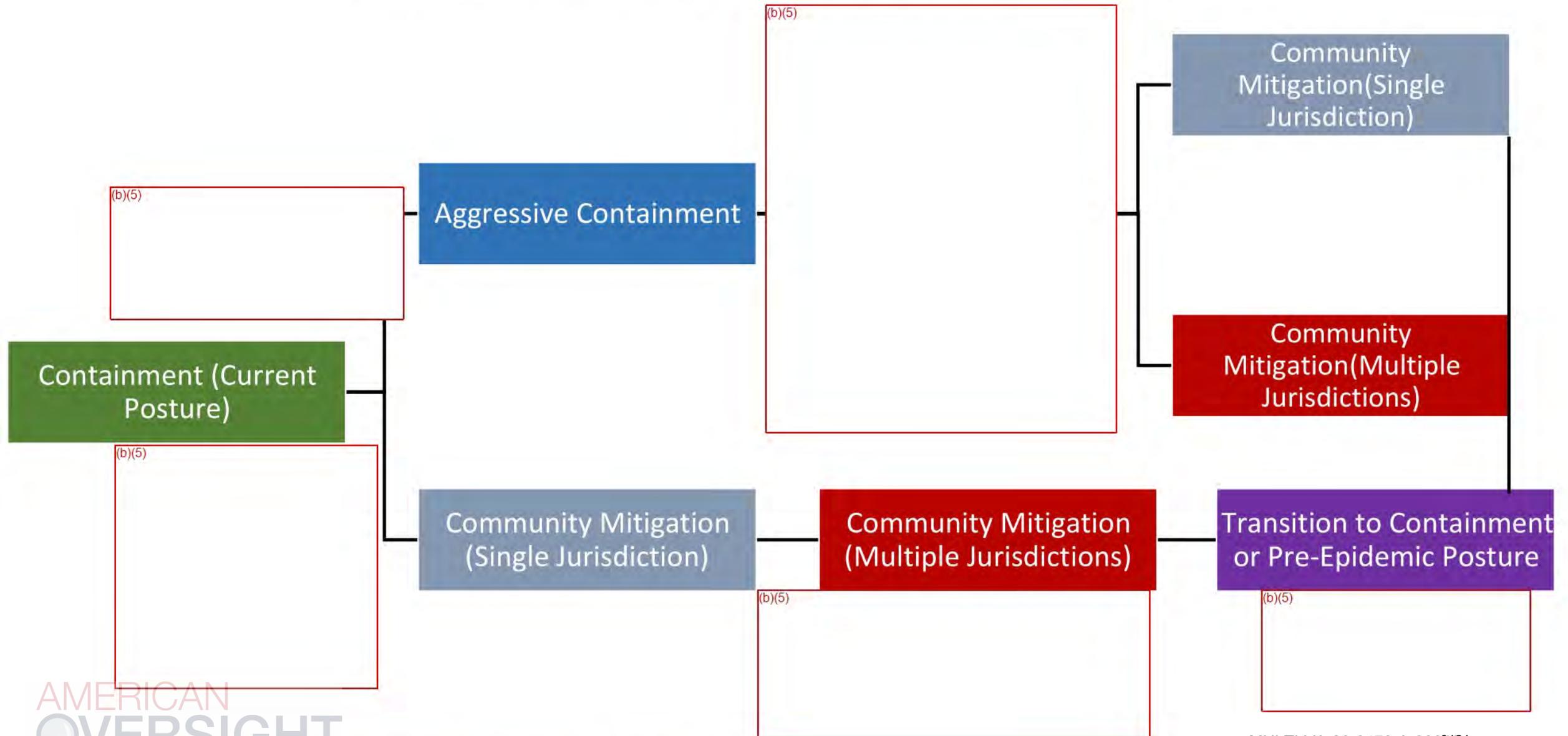
(b)(5)



(b)(5)



# U.S. Government Response to SARS-CoV2 Decision Tree



**From:** Stone, Richard A., MD  
**Sent:** Sat, 22 Feb 2020 14:49:01 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Yes

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
(www.blackberry.com)

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**From:** RLW <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Saturday, Feb 22, 2020, 9:41 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Powers, Pamela <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Keep me up to date.  
This is a veteran correct?

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
(www.blackberry.com)

---

**From:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Saturday, Feb 22, 2020, 9:34 AM  
**To:** Powers, Pamela <(b)(6)@va.gov>, RLW <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: VHA Mission

Please see below. If we accept a Veteran patient over the weekend I will inform you. Negative (isolation) airflow has been confirmed by engineering to ensure the unit is isolated. The emergency management team has now been at this for one month. They are tired but moral is very high. Well led by Paul Kim.

Rich

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
(www.blackberry.com)

---

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Date:** Saturday, Feb 22, 2020, 9:12 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>, <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Boyd, Teresa D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6) @va.gov>, Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Bader, Christine E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>, Carroll, William D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>, (b)(6)@va.gov>, MacDonald, Jennifer E. (Physician) <(b)(6)@va.gov>, (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update: I usually send an update in the evening however lots of moving parts overnight and this morning.

- Palo Alto did create a ward (7H +room numbers) and “activated it” in CPRS in order to provide patient care and EHR use.
- I did communicate with the VISN last night to refrain from the use of SCI as a description.
- Today five rooms at a minimum will be equipped with beds and all accompanying equipment, supplies and PPE will be moved in.
- The plan is to equip 13 rooms in total
- Nursing education and infection control will be providing just in time PPE/PAPR/donning/doffing training on Sunday for nursing, physician and other staff (EMS, police, etc.) as necessary.
- Actual staffing scenarios are still being worked out, and they will severely limit who goes in or out.
- The goal is to be ready by Monday to accept a patient(s), should that be a need – At this time there is NO indication that will happen with the current population at Travis, however as this entire event has progressed – this could change drastically.
- The next round of test results will be available sometime Sunday.
- The VISN CMO will be contacted first by Travis to “accept” the patient for VHA and the CMO will call the inpatient MD supervisor at Palo Alto to give report and accept the transfer.
- A special contracted/trained ambulance company would transport the patient to the facility.

EMCC actions this morning:

- We will be scheduling a call later today with the VISN and MC planners to ensure all are on the same sheet of paper – the EMCC needs clarity on the transfer and the use of US Marshalls as escorts.
- We will be providing a checklist to assist the facilities in their planning
- We will be providing a spreadsheet and instructions on tracking ALL costs associated with the preparedness, response and recovery efforts.
- EMCC has communicated the importance of tracking PPE usage and communicating daily with the EMCC on usage/burn rate, stocks and potential shortfalls/gaps

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Friday, February 21, 2020 4:33 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis



(b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Bader, Christine E.  
(b)(6)@va.gov; Carroll, William D. (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@va.gov; MacDonald, Jennifer E. (Physician) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@va.gov

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update: Today is 1 full month of EMCC operations – spirits are high and team is committed. The EMCC will be staggering coverage to include some virtual support to allow time to recharge.

- As a result of a sub quality at the Quality Inn and Suites, DEMPS and DMORT staff have been moved to new lodging. Our DEMPS are at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Concord CA: 45 John Glenn Dr, Concord, CA 94520
- Area Emergency Manager has arrived as part of the IMT at Lackland AFB, San Antonio TX
- 1000 – 2oz bottles of hand sanitizer will arrive Thursday for 810, 811, M Street and other VACO buildings, Logs has set aside enough for Senior Leadership
- 21895 unique visits to the VHA Public Health Website
- Veteran and spouse transferred from Travis to Kaiser Vallejo have been allowed by CA Health Department to return home and home isolate.
- Larry, Pete Brewster and I briefed the Network Directors on the COVID-19 TTX
- Network Directors were provided with guidance on Telework, Non-GFE and GFE connectivity and how to access OIT equipment in an emergency
- Occ Health briefed the 2:00pm call (110 participants) on employee protection
- I briefed and reminded all participants on the 2:00pm and 3:00pm calls of the SecVA's position to continue focusing on current contingency plans and preparations for a surge of sick Veterans.
- EMCC Logistics coordinated with PL&O and Contracting for the order of 50,000 – N95 masks and 50,000 isolation gowns
- EMCC Logistics, PL&O and Contracting have worked out a plan to spread future orders out in a way not to impact the supply chain. The plan will allow VHA to treat 4500 patients with the appropriate PPE.
- The 50,000 masks and 50,000 gowns will be shipped and stored at the NAC, should a facility need these supplies they will contact the EMCC and the EMCC will coordinate with the NAC for shipment. Only a select few individuals within the EMCC will have the authority to release these emergency supplies.

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov

**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2020 6:42 PM

**To:** Kim, Paul D., MD (b)(6)@va.gov; Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy

(b)(6)@va.gov; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@va.gov; Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6)@va.gov

**Cc:** (b)(6)@va.gov; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov; Ratchford Jr, Lewis

(b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Bader, Christine E.

(b)(6)@va.gov>; Carroll, William D. (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- On February 14, 2020 a report was filed with OSHA claiming “At the emergency room of the hospital, employees attending sick patients whom recently came from China with flu like symptoms are not being provided with respiratory protection, potentially exposing employees to the 2019 novel coronavirus.” The facility in question was the Tampa VAMC. On follow-up this morning the unofficial reports are the claims are unfounded. A complete report will be provided once the investigation has been completed.
- The two evacuees from Travis are positive for COVID-19 but are asymptomatic and are being transferred to Sacred Heart Medical Center in Spokane, WA.
- OEM Area Emergency Manager is on the ground as part of the HHS IMT at Lackland AFB, San Antonio, TX.
- San Antonio VAMC has put together a team to be at Lackland AFB tomorrow morning as Cohort 1 is released from quarantine. They will be setup in the out-processing tent beside HHS to identify any veterans that may be in the group and provide information and assistance as needed.

EMCC Actions

- 21,538 unique visits to the outward facing VHA Public Health Website
- Veteran who tested positive but remained asymptomatic and his wife were transported to Kaiser Vallejo.
- The 2006 Pandemic Plan was distributed for review and update by the workgroups.
- A draft document is under development concerning “stay home” messaging for patients, with the end goal to minimize physical visits and ER traffic to assist with infection control and surge capacity.
- Continue to reinforce messaging concerning the need to maintain expired PPE stocks until national level guidance (government as a whole) is provided.

---

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2020 7:13 AM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)@va.gov>;

Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell,

Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D.

(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis

(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E.

(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Carroll, William D.

(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- State of CA reached out to Palo Alto regarding the Veteran testing positive (asymptomatic), due to Travis policy that no PUIs or those testing positive will remain on base. State of CA Health

Department inquired on VHA's ability to house and care for the Veteran. The Veteran has asked to be placed in a Kaiser facility so that he can remain with his spouse. CA has said that due to the lack of beds they will have to move this Veteran out of state as they have done with many others and there is no guarantee the couple can stay together.

- I advise Palo Alto of VHA's current desire to keep families together and if the Veteran chooses to be in a VA facility we can accommodate him but not his spouse.
- The Veteran lives in the Travis area and we recommended home isolation per CDC guidance and NPIs and the state advised such an arrangement is "not enforceable".
- We will continue to follow this situation

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 19, 2020 5:53 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D.

<(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis

<(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E.

<(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Carroll, William D.

<(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

Diamond Princess Cruise (Japan)

- Japan - Forty-Five AMCITS Voluntarily on board; Fifty-Four AMCITS currently hospitalized in Japan; additional eight AMCITS awaiting transfer to hospital
- Lakeland AFB – Four positive cases COVID-19 and two PUIs
- Travis AFB – Seven positive cases COVID-19 and three PUIs
- Camp Ashland/UNMC – Eleven positive cases COVID-19
- DOD continues to ban any positive evacuees on any of the DOD bases
- HHS continues to ask the EMCC for available space within VA to house additional evacuees.
- Additional repatriation flight will take place however when is up in the air due to the lack of housing for future evacuees

EMCC Actions

- **1 Veteran and spouse currently at Travis are asymptomatic but have tested positive – Travis policy is anyone testing positive cannot stay on the base, transport to a civilian hospital is pending. The names were not released however this is the Veteran we arranged a Telehealth consult and provided medications.**
- One DEMPS volunteer utilized the CDC follow up text instant messaging system (TIM) to text a YES to symptoms - per protocol. Volunteer received a call from HHS Physician and VA Occupational Health Medical Advisor. **NEGATIVE**- validation for Corona virus symptoms. Volunteer was seen in community ED, Community Urgent care and in Occupational Health.
- DEMPS volunteer had cold symptoms - hotel room was cold, he was moved to another one, had overnight delay in airport on return trip home. Volunteer visited the ED and Urgent care X2 with cold like symptoms, temp 100, negative for rapid flu, all symptoms were investigated in ED/Urgent Care. It was decided this was not the result of the coronavirus

- Volunteer is being provided reassurances through talking and supportive care. Call placed from DEMPS Program Officer to debrief deployment and to give volunteer Employee Assistance Number for additional follow up as desired. Volunteer feels supported with all information. He has all necessary numbers to use as needed.
- 21051 unique visits to the outward facing VHA Public Health Website
- EMCC received a Task Order for an AEM to be embedded in the IMT at Lackland AFB. An AEM has been identified and will deploy this evening.
- It was discovered that 1 Veteran and his wife currently at Travis only were able to keep the clothes they were wearing, it is unknown where their luggage is
- The AEM on the ground inquired on what the Veteran and his wife needed and obtained a list of clothing to include pants, shirts, socks and underwear.
- The EMCC coordinated with VCS and a delivery of appropriate clothing was completed to the Veteran and spouse. Mr. and Mrs. McMurray wanted the EMCC to pass on "God Bless the VA"
- The EMCC has discovered there are/were many more Veterans than we have been able to identify in the first repatriation flights. The EMCC is working closely with HHS to track down these Veterans to make sure: 1) they do not have any unmet needs, 2) if they do seek care at any time at a VAMC they will not be subjected to any additional quarantine should they be asymptomatic and reveal their recent trip to China. It is important to not unnecessarily burden these Veterans.
- San Antonio VAMC has put together a team to be at Lackland AFB tomorrow morning as Cohort 1 is released from quarantine. They will meet Marc Fisher with HHS Public Health Service and setup in the out processing tent beside HHS. Quarantine officially lifts at 0900 tomorrow but the out processing activities will begin at 0800.
- VAMC personnel will be interacting with those released after they have gone through all screening, they will not need to be in PPE. The assessment team will identify any veterans that may be in the group, gather information and have packets of information to provide to any veterans identified as well as verify benefits.
- Larry Mole presented to all VHA PAOs on where we have come from, where we are and where we are going.
- Larry Mole presented to the Governance Board
- I attended the HHS Healthcare System Leader Listening Session-Wednesday, February 19, 2020 from 1:00-5:00pm Eastern Time – The Secretary of HHS welcomed the group and thanked the group for being partners in this response. The sessions provided a current overview of the novel coronavirus outbreak; discuss the healthcare system's preparedness and anticipated challenges related to surge, workforce protection, supply chain, and communication; and receive feedback on the federal government's activities to assist healthcare leaders' efforts to protect the nation.
- The major takeaway from this session – VHA is head and shoulders above our colleagues in the community healthcare coalitions when it comes to Emergency Management, Telehealth, response capabilities and the ability to act quickly, etc.. Compared to the rest of the healthcare providers in the US we are in great shape (my opinion).
- Individual from Illinois Department of Health did bring up on the HHS call a request for surgical masks was made to VA and others and they have run out of options. Did not feel it necessary to respond.
- The EMCC rolled out the COVID-19 Table top exercise to all VHA Emergency Managers at 4:00pm – 129 participants

- The Communications Workgroup rolled out VetLink and Kiosks forward facing information – 102 participants
- Signage should be 508 compliant and posted by the end of the week on the Sharepoint site.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2020 5:44 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis (b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- Dr. Anthony Fauci (U.S. NIH) said the outbreak of COVID-19 is on the brink of becoming a pandemic. "It certainly is on the verge of that happening reasonably soon unless containment is more successful than it is right now," Fauci told CBS News, adding that two dozen countries outside of mainland China have approximately 500 cases of the virus. "Several of them," he added, "are starting to get to the second and third transmission." A pandemic officially means that there are several countries with sustained transmission from "person to person to person," Fauci explained. [02/18/20]
- HHS reiterated on their call that "we will be in this for several months to come"
- HHS and the NSC expressed frustrations with the lack of space to place any future evacuees, there is a possibility that AMCITS from Japan and all other countries that are experiencing this outbreak will need to be repatriated.
- HHS has indicated to the EMCC a request for capabilities and space may be coming to VHA.
- HHS inquired through the OEM HHS LNO if there are any spaces/building available from the Appendix D-Disposal and Reuse Reports – referencing the FY2019 submission. I assured HHS these spaces/buildings are NOT inhabitable.
- I reiterated the SecVA's position and his request for a Sec-Sec or a COVID-19 White House Task Force direct request for VA assistance.
- Notified today of the Whole of Government Logistics Supply Chain meeting for Thursday, January 20, 2020. Director of HHS Resource Management wanted to ensure the right VHA representative would be in attendance and be able to speak to VHA PPE issues related to this response. I assured the Director both myself and the PL&O representatives would be in attendance.
- NSC stated at the 1230 conference call this is a "federal response under a federal order in the absence of a Stafford Act declaration" and all departments and agencies are expected to step up.
- HHS, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are conducting a listening session (invitation only) with healthcare system leaders on **Wednesday, February 19, 2020** from 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm ET. This

session is part of the ASPR Health Care System Resilience Task Force and is designed to provide a current overview of the novel coronavirus outbreak; discuss the healthcare system's preparedness and anticipated challenges related to surge, workforce protection, supply chain, and communication; and receive feedback on the federal government's activities to assist healthcare leaders' efforts to protect the nation. I have RSVP'd and will be attending.

EMCC Actions:

- Medical Center COVID-19 signage should be approved for distribution 2/19/20
- COVID-19 Tabletop exercise was briefed on the 2:00pm call and again at 3:00pm. The exercise will be briefed in more detail to all Emergency Managers at 4:00pm on 2/19/20. DUSHOM memo was released today @ 5:30pm 2/18/20.
- The EMCC received a request from the Illinois Department of Public Health SNS Coordinator on behalf of DuPage County for surgical masks to support their current and future operations. Request was denied and passed on to the Hines VAMC.
- On 2/17/20 a Veteran was identified as part of the evacuees from the Diamond Princess (not on the list provided to VHA OEM). The Veteran indicated he has an enrollee card and was in the process of transferring his care to VHA from Kaiser. Due to his quarantine he missed his February 6<sup>th</sup> appointment at the Fremont, CA CBOC. His current prescription from Kaiser has expired and he is down to 2 pills.
- As of 1:00pm ET the VISN 21 CMO has been briefed and he has asked a Palo Alto VAMC Nurse Practitioner to make contact with the Veteran.
- The AEM on site is assisting with the coordination and will brief the Veterans on how to participate in a Telehealth appointment
- Telehealth consult was arranged and completed at 1:30pm ET
- ALL Veteran's unmet needs have been fulfilled.

From: (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>

Sent: Monday, February 17, 2020 5:13 PM

To: Kim, Paul D., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steve <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>

Cc: (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis

<(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>

Subject: RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- Thirteen (13) AMCITS were taken to Omaha for further care
  - Six (6) that were on Flight #1 (Travis)
  - Seven (7) that were on Flight #2 (Lackland)
- Seven (7) from Travis were transported to local hospitals
  - **Five (5) were asymptomatic and tested positive**
  - Two (2) are PUIs
- One (1) from Lackland has been identified as a PUI and transported to a local hospital

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2020 7:32 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- During the secondary screening process the AEM on the ground saw one of the passengers with a USMC hat on and approached the Veteran, AEM had proper PPE on and maintained the 6 feet of distance.
- Passenger indicated he was a Veteran and enrolled in My Healthy Vet and would need prescription refills.
- AEM is working with the HHS team to ensure he receives his refills and to identify any other Veteran's needs.
- This is a great example of how important it is to have OEM/VHA on the ground during these events.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD  
**Sent:** Monday, February 17, 2020 7:13 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- Flight #1 landed at Travis with 167 PAX at 0229ET see photo
- Flight #2 landed at Lackland with 151 PAX at 0456ET
- Travis has reported several testing positive during the flight, those PAX were moved to the bio-containment unit onboard, we are awaiting the exact number once officials on the ground have sorted through the details.

- Member Services did an amazing job scrubbing the ship manifest and provided 29 confirmed/possible Veterans and their families that maybe onboard the flights at Travis and Lackland. The list has been provided to the HHS SOC and the AEM at Travis.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Sunday, February 16, 2020 3:48 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- Two aircraft are in Japan to return AMCITS from the Diamond Princess cruise ship
- One aircraft is due to arrive at Travis AFB at approximately 2045ET on February 16, 2020 with approximately 166 AMCITS
- One aircraft is due to arrive at Lackland AFB at approximately 0010ET on February 17, 2020 with approximately 148 AMCITS
- Both aircraft have been outfitted with bio-containment sections for the medical staff to safely travel while attending to the passengers.
- The ship manifest had 417 AMCITS and it is unknown if all will make the trip, the final tally will only be known once the aircraft are inbound.
- The list of 417 AMCITS has been provided to Member Services, this is a very close hold list and the list was password protected. I was the only one that was provided the password. The list was sent to one person in Member Services by encrypted email. The password was sent to the same individual under separate copy, also encrypted. The emails were also protected so they could not be shared further.
- As of this email two (2) Veterans have been identified and as suspected they are both accompanied by their spouses. One (1) Veteran is 69 and the other is 72. Both are Air Force Veterans
- One American couple was not allowed to depart due to the wife testing positive.
- Many of the AMCITS being evacuated have expressed anger at the US Govt. due to the requirement to be quarantined for an additional 14 days upon their arrival on US soil.
- The search of the 417 names to verify Veteran status continues and the EMCC will have a complete list as soon as possible.
- In the event any of the evacuated AMCITS require hospitalization HHS/CDC teams will closely follow these individuals daily.
- In order to free up quarters at Travis the DEMPS personnel have been moved to a local hotel and HHS has provided the transportation assets for any local travel needed.
- 19,490 unique visits to the forward facing VA Public Health website <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/index.asp>
- Several additional documents have been added to the HCI Sharepoint site [HCI SharePoint](#)



- The VHA Medical facility and Staff Office Table Top exercises are complete – the DUSHOM memo has been drafted for signature to include a set of instructions that will accompany the memo.
- A Nationwide Adobe Connect will take place on Wednesday to introduce the exercise, set the timeline for completion and answer any questions that the audience may have.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Saturday, February 15, 2020 2:50 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- HHS is fine tuning the repatriation plans for the AMCITS on the Princess Cruise Ship. There are many moving parts and a great many obstacles. HHS hopes to begin moving people on Sunday at the earliest. There is a high likelihood there will be Veterans on the evacuee manifest and the EMCC is working with HHS to identify any Veterans.
- Updating 2006 VA Pan Flu Plan to 2020 COVID-19 Plan to provide Department-wide guidance
- Continue to develop and design implementation of NPIs
- The foundational document for the VHA COVID-19 Contingency/Supportive Care Plan has been developed. The plan will now be shared with the workgroup SMEs and AEMs to fine tune and finalize the plan.
- Researching information on community recovery from epidemics to build out a recovery and reconstitution plan
- Continuity of Healthcare planning – two additional areas we are focusing on should we experience a worst case scenario and there is a need to increase the COGCON level for the NCR:
  - PPE to cover VHA COOP personnel – protection for all VHA senior leadership – we do not want to draw down Martinsburg’s supply
  - Point of Dispensing – POD – should a vaccine be developed and/or antivirals prove to be effective there is a high probability that VA medical facilities will be asked to serve as PODs for all local federal employees. Martinsburg has a robust plan and we are checking on other facilities.

**Note:** A result from the interagency Crimson Contagion - Pan Flu exercise – The supplies, syringes needed to accomplish a mass vaccination would be in short supply due to NO manufacturing capability in the US.
- OEM has stockpiled enough food (25 year shelf life) to sustain and support the Martinsburg VAMC and any influx of ERG members for 30 days in the event of a COOP activation

- COVID-19 Tabletop exercise has been finalized and will be rolled out on the national Comprehensive Emergency Management Program (CEMP) call on Wednesday. This call is attended by all Emergency Management professionals across the VHA enterprise.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD  
**Sent:** Friday, February 14, 2020 6:17 PM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- HHS is preparing for additional repatriation missions from Japan. No details at this time – once I type any details they will change as soon as I hit send.
- HHS has turned off the Task Order for Telehealth at this time, however we were asked to continue to gather details of capabilities. There are currently enough providers on the ground for the current mission. We continue to work with TEM to ensure all preparedness information on capabilities are ready to launch should the request become a reality.
- TEM has built a 2 week roster, identified a hub and 2 dedicated physicians to support any future mission. OEM logistics is prepared to support as needed. In the event TEM is deployed, TEM leadership will provide a representative to the EMCC.
- HHS was able to research and resolve the delay in testing kits ordered by VHA the first kits should be arriving as early as this weekend.
- DUSHOM memo – Inclusion of Virtual Care in Outpatient Care Contingency Planning for Disasters - detailing the use of Telehealth in response to disasters and emergencies transmitted to the field.
- A DUSHOM memo providing additional guidance on PPE tracking and notification should facilities require immediate resupply was transmitted today to the field.
- I also had a long conversation with the SES over the HHS Supply Chain and Director Resource Management. I discussed the desire of VHA to order additional PPE and he provided me with guidance on how not to disrupted the supply chain. He also reviewed our list and requirements. OEM now has a plan and is working with contracting to ensure VHA can continue to resupply as needed.
- OEM reviewed the PPE contents of the Pharm Caches – the PPE contained within is not counted in the medical center totals. Any activation of the cache requires immediate notification of OEM/Pop Health, the actual contents of the caches are not common knowledge in the facilities so this store of PPE will remain for emergencies only. Without providing details – 500 additional patients can be treated for 14 days with the PPE contained in the caches.
- Industrial Hygiene provide 3 Courses of Action on alternatives to the N95 which we have added to the PPE tool box
- 19,490 unique visits to the VHA Public Health Website

- The 3 additional DEMPS screeners are due to arrive at Travis this evening and an AEM will coordinate their in processing and orientation
- Communications workgroup has finalized COVID-19 signage for all facilities, final approval expected on Tuesday
- COVID-19 Screening on VetLink SOP developed for approval – Provides high-level information regarding the process patients will experience and what staff should expect to see and do if a positive screening originates from the VetLink questionnaire. Includes information regarding implementation support and kiosk sanitizing guidelines. Specific review/concurrence in order to ensure congruence with other teams/processes being developed within EMCC.
- COVID-19 Screening on VetLink Screenshots developed for approval – Shows VetLink application screenshots of the 3 possible scenarios, Notifications staff will see on the VetLink Patient Queue (staff-facing application), and the available VetLink reports that can be run
- Kiosk Questionnaire Training for Facility Staff developed for approval – Template training offering for local sites to use for pre-implementation activities which allows sites to customize the training based on their local processes
- First draft of the Governance Board COVID-19 exercise presentation developed and being fine-tuned.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Thursday, February 13, 2020 5:35 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- US confirmed cases 15
- AMCITs who have tested positive (33) (Princess Cruise) have been transferred to hospitals across nine Japanese provinces. Government of Japan will not give reciprocity to U.S. to practice medicine in hospitals, only on the cruise ship.
- HHS interagency Emergency Support Function call – HHS ASPR briefed this is an “all hands on deck response and we are one team focused on ensuring we protect the public health, economy and security of the US.”
- HHS has the authority through the Economy Act to request assistance from the interagency in the absence of a Stafford Act. Attached is a summary of the Economy Act.
- HHS indicated they are prepared to execute Interagency Agreements (IAAs) with each Department and Agency – As the primary medical support to ESF8 VA should expect additional requests.
- HHS expects additional repatriation missions, planning is ongoing.

- HHS has formed the Health Care System Resilience Task Force and asked for OEM representation. The VHA planning is about 3 weeks ahead of HHS so they are looking for some insight from how we are accomplishing our tasks.
- HHS reiterated during a PPE call the need to coordinate any PPE purchases and avoid large bulk orders. The world supply chain is very fragile and any large bulk orders will disrupt all supplies. HHS also warned it is very unlikely any such orders will be honored and will further lengthen the time between the order and fulfillment of any kind.

EMCC Actions:

- The EMCC received an RFI on Telehealth capabilities from HHS. HHS is looking to provide support to Behavioral Health needs at Observation Support Bases in Newark, Chicago, JFK, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Hawaii. I have a meeting later tonight with Dr. Yeskey to gather more details.
- Safety/Industrial Hygiene has completed a great deal of research on alternatives for N95s and OEM will convene a conference call on Friday, February 14, 2020 with Safety/Industrial Hygiene, Infectious Diseases and PL&O to develop strong recommendations moving forward and a plan for procurement.
- Current number of isolation rooms in VHA are 726 up from 249, we still have some gaps to fill and will have another update.
- OEM logistics is working with HHS to identify/resolve the hold up in VHA's order of COVID-19 test kits.
- OEM has completed the development of two (2) discussion based exercises (Tabletop exercises – TTXs) that will focus on preparedness and response to COVID-19. Upon completion of the exercise each facility should have an understanding of how to implement COVID-19 preparedness and response activities.

The TTXs are designed for:

- VAMCs to include ancillary facilities,
- VA Administrations and staff offices (non-healthcare),
- The exercises are generic by design and can be modified by each facility,
- Facilities will be required to complete the exercise within two (2) weeks of launching via webinar (Wednesday, February 19, 2020),
- Completion results will be entered into the Performance Improvement Management System (PIMS),
- Each facility will conduct their internal AAR – any items that require OEM or VHACO intervention to resolve will be submitted to OEM for action/recommendations

**From:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 12, 2020 6:48 PM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Bader, Christine E. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Kim, Paul D., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- Another evacuee at Miramar has tested positive and is being treated at a local hospital. This is the second confirmed case at Miramar.
- Planning continues for repatriation AMCITS on the Princess Cruise Ship.
  - Thirty-three individuals on the ship that tested positive for COVID-19 have been transported to local hospitals in Japan.
  - Planning factor of 256 used for repatriation
  - Individuals must be asymptomatic to board the aircraft
- HHS Task Order for 6 DEMPS personnel to support screening operations at Travis AFB
  - DUSHOM memorandum distributed
  - Travel booked for 3 and 3 are going through the facility approval process
- Occupational Health post-deployment guidance has been released to the field
- 2pm VHA VISN leadership call provided up to date guidance on the lab testing protocols using CDC test kits
- 3pm HCI Workgroup call, the Veteran/Employee Triage workgroup provided updates on ED UCC triage, occupational health, and scripting for kiosks

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2020 6:43 PM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)@va.gov; Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov; Ratchford Jr, Lewis (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Bader, Christine E. (b)(6)@va.gov

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- The novel coronavirus has been renamed it is now referred to as **COVID-19**
- HHS is finalizing a DEMPS Task Order for 6 Nursing Assistants to support screening operations at Travis Air Force Base. This will cover the repatriation of those AMCITS currently on the Princess Cruise Ship. DUSHOM memo is prepared and will be submitted once the TO has been received
- Completed a draft letter to the Medical Centers Directors of the facilities where the 11 DEMPS volunteers will be returning to ensure MC leadership they have all been cleared to return to work. The letters will be out tomorrow in time for their return to work.
- CDC launched an effort called "Health Pulse" and will be partnering with VHA as a sentinel group of healthcare systems. The goal is the sharing of information that hospital EDs routinely collect. This request has been reviewed by VHA subject matter experts and Dr. Chad Kessler will be the POC and work directly with the CDC on this request.
- Lab tests and collection procedures were finalized and transmitted to the field through a DUSHOM memo. Guidance has also been uploaded on the HCI site.
- Additional leave guidance and clarification was transmitted to the field by WMC

- OEM convened a 12:00pm conference call and began the Department wide long term planning to address two fold planning – Non-pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs) and Resilience/Continuity of Healthcare. The focus - to provide an enterprise-wide VHA response to ensure workforce viability, critical infrastructure protection, economic impact mitigation, appropriate social distancing, scarce resource allocations, prioritization of treatment/countermeasures, and medical surge operations in response to the COVID-19.
- The 12:00pm call will be merged into the standing 3:00pm Workgroup call and will cover the 4 Phases (Phase 1 - Contingency Planning/Training, Phase 2 - Breakout/Triggers, Phase 3 – Establish alternate sites of care, Phase 4 – Operations) of the Healthcare Continuity Planning – the initial meeting will establish clear objectives, clear deliverables, establish a timeline/milestones

**Preliminary results**

1. Exercise plan has been drafted, team will refine and complete – plan is for a nationwide tabletop webinar next week – focus will be on safety – “follow the plan and you will be safe”
2. 650 Safety personnel and Industrial Hygienists – will clarify CBOC coverage.
3. 15-20 OEM personnel are train-the-trainers in PPE donning.
4. 249 negative pressure rooms – HOC will verify the data to ensure accuracy.
5. Isolation rooms – facilities have the ability to create negative pressure rooms (see attached) provided the supplies are available
6. 250 bed mobile hospital – the system is separated among 6 facilities (Prescott/Amarillo/Big Springs/Phoenix/Albuquerque/Tucson – 30 isolation/negative pressure beds, portable dining/food prep, HVAC, power generation – set up 10-12 hours by 30 trained personnel. The footprint requires 1 acre. See second attachment.
7. Several CFORT assets and numerous Western Shelters, Zumbro Shelters, Alaskan Shelters are available

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2020 7:06 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A.

<(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- Possible repatriation from the Princess Cruise Ship, ongoing discussions on where and when this will occur.
- 1 evacuee at Miramar tested positive for the coronavirus and has been transported to a local hospital.

EMCC Actions:

- Occupational Health, Infectious Disease, DEMPS National Coordinator, Dr. Carter Mecher and HHS discussed the return of all DEMPS personnel. Special instructions have been prepared for

each and monitored by HHS Chief Medical Officer. **The Chief Medical Officer for the Assistant Secretary of Preparedness and Response at HHS has deemed that at this time, the team deployed, including our VHA volunteers, has remained safe and protected with zero breaches in the respective PPE gear during the deployment. Therefore, the deployed volunteers may safely return to their regular duties.** All VHA experts agree that they do not foresee any concerns and/or risks of these individuals returning to their normal duties.

- We are crafting a message to go out prior to these individuals returning home that will be sent to each Medical Center Director to reassure these facility Directors there are no risks. We also want to ensure these individuals are not subjected to the uninformed regarding their mission, they are not targets of mis-information and are treated well on their return.
- Coronavirus and Highly Contagious Screening Guidance was developed, cleared and will be posted on the HCI Sharepoint Site.
- DUSHOM Laboratory Instructions and guidance drafted and prepared for DUSHOM signature, will be forwarded tomorrow
- Awaiting formal request from the CDC to collaborate with Emergency Medicine on ED monitoring.
- Presented to the Infectious Disease forum (over 500 VA participants) on current VHA actions
- 2pm VHA VISN leadership call provided up to date guidance on PPE
- Tomorrow will be a big day for Sharepoint activity, a great deal of information will be uploaded.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Sunday, February 9, 2020 3:41 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)@va.gov; Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov

**Cc:** (b)(6)@va.gov; Hinkle, Michael C. (b)(6)@va.gov; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov; Ratchford Jr, Lewis (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- 812 evacuees are quarantined at 5 facilities
- There are a total of 10 Person's Under Investigation (PUI) across the 5 locations.
- Total persons quarantined: 809
- Princess Cruise Ship – total PAX 3,711 – 428 AMCITs – Lab confirmed 13, Total confirmed cases onboard 64
- Japan has identified their primary challenge is supplies of medications for quarantined passengers are running low.
- Japan Ministry of Health has request USG assistance in ensuring proper medication dispensing
- 3 AMCITS disembarked in Taiwan – CDC/CBP have the lead in tracking
- Westerdam Cruise Ship – Current location off the coast of Keelung, Taiwan – Total PAX 2000+, 701 AMCITs, confirmed cases – 0: Cruise Ship departed Hong Kong on

February 1, 2020, 4 countries (Japan, Taiwan, Guam and Philippines) have denied docking.

- Additional Wuhan flights are still under discussion, several additional sites have been identified, however NORTHCOM approval is pending. At this time Travis appears to be the ongoing base of flight operations. Several communities are rejecting repatriation assistance due to fears of exposure and infection.

#### EMCC Actions

- AEM on the ground at March AFB has identified 4 Veterans in the quarantined population and they do not have any unmet needs and are happy to be home.
- AEM on the ground at Travis has confirmed there are no Veterans in the quarantined population.
- Discussed with HHS my dismay for listing every other Department assisting with this response and no mention of VA/VHA. I was assured this would be fixed immediately.
- The EMCC is developing predictive analysis tools for addition to the Storyboard (Epidemiology/Statistics, VHA PUIs mapping -Veterans/Employees, VHA PUI Histogram Veteran/Employee quarantine timeline, and Weekly Priorities)
- EMCC produced a Pre-decisional draft/FOUO planning document - **nCoV2019 Planning Potential Considerations** - To provide an enterprise-wide VHA response to ensure workforce viability, critical infrastructure protection, economic impact mitigation, appropriate social distancing, scarce resource allocations, prioritization of treatment/countermeasures, and medical surge operations in response to the nCoV2019. The intent is to begin discussions and planning should multiple Veteran cases materialize. Document has been share with the DUSHOM and ADUSH A/O
- Up to date Tic Toc has been shared with DUSHOM, ADUSH A/O and VHA Office of Communications. The Tic Toc tracks the VHA, EMCC and Pop Health actions to date.

I will be releasing the team early tonight, Monday is shaping up to be a very challenging day.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Saturday, February 8, 2020 2:55 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>;

Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell,

Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A.

<(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- All scheduled repatriation flights have landed and all passenger have been screened and are either in quarters or have been transferred to treatment facilities



- The screening mission has ended for these flights, CDC will be debriefing all screeners and presenting the plan for them moving forward.
- It is unclear if there will be additional flights, this remains a fluid situation
- The Diamond Princess (cruise ship) currently quarantined near Tokyo has 3,200 passengers
- 237 passenger (picked randomly) have been tested for the virus – 89 have tested positive for nCoV
- CDC has recommended to the Japanese State Department that the 430 AMCITS currently on board remain quarantined on the ship.
- Japanese govt. wants the AMCITS removed and repatriated like those from Wuhan
- US State Department/CDC responded that all those repatriated from Wuhan were tested and screened 6 times and no one testing positive was allowed to board the aircraft and leave Wuhan
- CDC stressed they have not tested the AMCITS on the ship and would be willing to send a team to do so.
- Japanese Consulate will meet with Japanese Health officials to determine what assistance Japan will offer.

#### EMCC actions

- Latest WMC Authorized Absence (AA) guidance transmitted to all field entities at 8:00am this morning
- Provided the OPM link for the source information on the AA guidance to the field.
- Questions generated by the new AA are being gathered and will be submitted to WMC for the appropriate guidance
- Addressed questions from VISNs regarding the support of local consortiums on supplies and PPE support and reiterated the DUSHOM guidance.
- All Workgroup Sharepoint Sites have been launched and are live
- Coordinating with Larry Mole to add a “clinical” section to the daily storyboard to ensure the most accurate/timely information is being shared with one “voice”
- Continue to address many concerns regarding PPE burn rates, supply chain availability and expiration extensions.
- Reached out to CDC/HHS on the “one and done” usage of N95s for clarification and guidance.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Friday, February 7, 2020 5:29 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6) @va.gov; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6) @va.gov; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6) @va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6) @va.gov; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6) @va.gov; (b)(6) va.gov

**Cc:** (b)(6) @va.gov; (b)(6) @va.gov; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6) .gov; Ratchford Jr, Lewis (b)(6) @va.gov; (b)(6) va.gov

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

Today was primarily a day to coordinate all the moving pieces. I attended the ASPR PPE Supply chain call and here are some of the highlights. I have shared these with PL&O

- Dr. Kadlec reminded everyone of the highly sensitive nature of the discussions and the importance of messaging to prevent hoarding and taxing an already taxed supply chain
- PPE suppliers are preparing for amounts estimated in the billions
- CDC is looking beyond the healthcare industry
- No major problems in distribution at this point but there is a draw down in inventories
- 70% of distributors are seeing 2-8 times the normal orders
- Distributors are currently filling 80-100% of orders, many on allocations
- 24 facilities and 6 manufactures in the US are able to ramp up production
- Manufacturers have planned during previous outbreaks and have designated certain lines to serve China and the rest are focused on the US
- Not sure what the impact would be if there are shortages in raw materials and packaging
- Global draw down will continue
- Non-pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs) will be key to managing the outbreak

Break

- The workgroups are doing extraordinary work and we have hit a good rhythm. We should be seeing comprehensive products next week
- The 2pm daily nationwide call will focus on gathering questions from the field and the workgroups will provide an answer within 24 hours.
- The 3pm Workgroup call will focus on presentations, future planning and coordination with each Workgroup facilitator.
- The Public Health website reported 14,099 unique visits as of 3pm Friday, February 6, 2020
- The EMCC will be split this weekend to give people a day off. We are still supporting DEMPS employees in the field and we will be concentrating on the Battle Rhythm for the coming week.
- Team is tired but spirits are high.
- VCS will be supporting the EMCC all weekend to keep everyone fueled.

This has been a unique response and I continue to marvel at what this family can do when there is an unprecedented challenge in front of them. Nothing is too hard and the support we have received from all parts of VHA has been spectacular!

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Thursday, February 6, 2020 5:24 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update: Please do not forward the attached documents so we can maintain OPSEC.

- OEM did verify with HHS: ALL evacuees that convert and test positive for nCoV2019 will be added to the overall cases in the US. Currently there are 5 individuals who are under hospital care and awaiting test results.
- HHS Senior Leadership Supply Chain Task Force will be held on Friday, February 7, 2020, time TDB and no location or call in number has been provided. OEM was instructed the information is forth coming.
- At 10:26am OEM received a Request for Information from the VA IOC. The HHS request submitted through the ExecSec and in preparation for the Supply Chain Task Force. In short the request was seeking information on: 1) government stockpiles and 2) purchasing plans
- At 2:29pm after being cleared by the ADUSH A/O the attached information was transmitted to the VA IOC with the following instructions: This is not classified however all the information attached in the entirety is extremely **CLOSE HOLD**. The aggregate of this information will provide VHA's operational capabilities when responding to an all Hazards emergency and must be protected. I have indicated that I am the POC for the information contained in the attached documents
- The information will be transmitted via classified channels (JWICS) to HHS.
- The first of the workgroup Sharepoint sites (nCov-19 Isolation, Quarantine and Treatment) was launched. These Sharepoint sites will make it easier for each workgroup to share information and consolidate final products.
- Workgroups are fully functioning and addressing multiple questions from the field. The answers will be published widely on the Sharepoint site.
- Provided an up to date Tic Toc to VHA Communications.
- Awaiting confirmation of the arrival of the next aircraft with 390 evacuees. Attached is a photo of the MUV and LSV positioned to support the IMT receiving the aircraft.
- Deployed an additional AEM to Travis due to the extended operations.
- DOD approved 11 DOD facilities near airports as third line options for housing patients with nCoV.
- CDC distributed test kits to about 200 qualified labs nationwide, and another 200 test kits to international labs. Each kit can perform diagnostics on 700-800 patient samples. The agency advises that the distribution of the tests will improve the global capacity to detect and respond to the virus.
- China has applied for a new patent on an experimental Gilead Sciences Inc. drug that its scientists believe might fight the coronavirus. The company is shipping enough doses of Remdesivir to treat 500 patients as two clinical trials begin in China.

Break

- We are closely monitoring the tornado outbreak in the south and the line of severe thunderstorms heading north and east.

Break

- We are also following up on news reports from Puerto Rico of "Veterans living in tents in that area. They are homeless at this moment and I don't believe VBA and/or VHA have any knowledge of the presence of these Veterans living in awful conditions."

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Monday, February 3, 2020 6:36 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)>@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)>@va.gov>;

Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

Outward facing Public Health Website has launched:

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/index.asp>

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/index.asp>

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**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Monday, February 3, 2020 5:25 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

On today's National Incident Communications Conference Line (NICCL) the CDC announced the following:

**CDC:** Be careful **NOT** to describe evacuees as "US citizens." There may be some foreign nationals (not China) on these flights. In that light please don't describe everyone as "repatriated." Use **passengers** or **evacuees**. Gretchen Michael reminded the group that evacuees in quarantine are not free to leave so they are technically NOT "repatriated."

We are running this to ground with HHS, HHS was also surprised. The mission was described as "repatriation of American Citizens, we have Americans in danger and we need to get them home".

**This statement is very concerning and I had direct conversations with HHS that if this statement is true we will be pulling our DEMPS Personnel.** HHS was in agreement and supported this position. I hope to have a definitive answer by tomorrow morning when HHS has access to the flight manifest.

If this is not the correct plan of action please advise.

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Monday, February 3, 2020 6:49 AM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Mole, Larry A. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- 11 of the 12 DEMPS personnel arrived yesterday
- 1 (one) had their flight cancelled and is expected to arrive today. The HHS IMT is aware and will adjust training and fit testing to meet their arrival
- I spoke directly with the City of Chicago Deputy Emergency Manager and explained the cancelling of the agreement to house evacuees. I was informed that the cancellation would be raised up their chain and to HHS by the Chicago representatives. I apologized and assured them this should not jeopardize the great relationship between VA and the City and I was assured it would not, however the city is out of options.
- At approximately, 8:30pm I received a call from the PDAS ASPR wanting to know how he could help with the "issues" in Chicago. I explained the circumstances in detail. Dr. Yeskey asked me to send the language for a Task Order (TO) that would protect VA and accomplish the mission. He indicated he would run it up the chain and have the ASPR move it forward.
- At approximately 8:35pm I shared the details of my conversation with Larry Connell and the proposed language in the draft TO. Larry Connell and I had several conversations and he in turn briefed the VA COS.
- At approximately 9:15pm Larry Connell relayed a request from the VA COS: the SecVA would like S1 HHS to call him to discuss the issue.
- At approximately 9:20pm I spoke directly with the PDAS ASPR and indicated he would pass the request up the chain and thanked VA for being a good partner, "we are in this together"
- Immediately after my conversation with the PDAS ASPR I spoke with the Chicago AEM and verified that the mission to assist the City of Chicago was not approved and if anything changed I would relay the latest information.
- At approximately 9:51pm I briefed Tammy Czarnecki of the latest developments.

3 additional cases have been confirmed in CA

China has complete construction of the 1000 bed hospital and will start staffing today

**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD

**Sent:** Sunday, February 2, 2020 5:07 PM

**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Boyd, Teresa D. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy <(b)(6)@va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. <(b)(6)@va.gov>; <(b)(6)@va.gov>

(b)(6) @va.gov>  
C: (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; Mole, Larry A.  
(b)(6) @va.gov>; Ratchford Jr, Lewis (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Update:

- 2 of the 12 DEMPS screeners have arrived, all should be on the ground by 3:30 West coast time.
- The OEM AEM embedded in the IMT will ensure all arrivals are processed in and any needs addressed.
- OEM Logistics is in direct contact with HHS Logistics to ensure there are no glitches in pickups at the airport.
- Due to the fact that the DEMPS mission ends on the 14<sup>th</sup> and the quarantine for the evacuees ends on the 18<sup>th</sup>, HHS has asked that we extend the customary 14 day deployment to accommodate the 14 day quarantine. The DEMPS deployment section will address this issue with each MC and supervisor. We are confident we can have the extension granted for each individual. If we have any shortfalls we will recruit for a replacement and have them on the ground in time for fit testing, training and insertion into the rotation.
- Each evacuee will be screened 5 times a day.

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**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 2, 2020 7:54 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6) @va.gov>; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6) @va.gov>;  
Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6) @va.gov>; Oshinski, Renee (b)(6) @va.gov>; Czarnecki, Tammy  
(b)(6) @va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6)  
(b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) @va.gov>; Mole, Larry A.  
(b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Updates:

- The first DEMPS personnel will begin arriving today all should be on the ground by this evening and ready to train in the morning.
- The AEM on the ground has all the flight information and will ensure everyone is well taken care of
- HHS revealed last night they were having difficulty with securing a contract for feeding the evacuees and inquired if VHA could assist. I initially said no, however after speaking with Tammy and Ray they both agreed they could assist. We are awaiting a "go, no go" order from HHS this morning. If this is a real mission the feeding will occur at Travis and HHS will pay all costs associated with the mission through an IAA. – more to come
- AEM in Chicago revealed that the city has up to 50 suspected cases and asked if VHA could help house during the quarantine period. The ask for VHA would be 4-5 individuals. Local leadership at the MC level was considering assisting. I conducted a conference call with our AEM and detailed what we would need should we provide this assistance. All costs associated with housing each individual must be tracked and a bill generated. I also advised our AEM that the City of Chicago must have a contingency plan should we need this space for Veterans care. This

will all be memorialized in an email to local leadership so they have the information at hand, we will also provide additional guidance as needed. Although this is a declared Public Health Emergency there is not a Stafford declaration.

8<sup>th</sup> case confirmed in Boston  
1<sup>st</sup> death outside of China – in the Philippines  
2000 additional cases reported in China in the last 24 hours

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**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 1, 2020 11:53 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)@va.gov; Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6)@va.gov; Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Cc:** (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Mole, Larry A. (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** RE: VHA Mission

Close Hold

The 4 repatriation sites are:

Omaha, Nebraska – HHS has a standing relationship with the State and the University of Nebraska Medical Center – 75 evacuees  
Lackland Air Force Base – 250 evacuees  
Travis Air Force Base – 350 evacuees  
Miramar – 250 evacuees

90 children under 2  
128 minors over 2  
20 Adults over 70

Active duty who are housed at the 3 DoD sites will be moved to community hotels. There is great concern that word will get out prior to the plan being solidified, with aircraft in the air and all entities are preparing for possible protests.

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**From:** Kim, Paul D., MD (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Date:** Saturday, Feb 01, 2020, 7:24 AM  
**To:** Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov; Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)@va.gov; Boyd, Teresa D. (b)(6)@va.gov; Oshinski, Renee (b)(6)@va.gov; Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6)@va.gov; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6)@va.gov (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Cc:** (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** VHA Mission

Good morning,

As of this morning the plan for the second wave of repatriation involving VHA DEMPS personnel is as follows: this plan is not expected to change however this entire event changes rapidly so we remain flexible.

- We will roster 12 (currently have 11) and provide those names to HHS. The original ask was for 14. We will continue to reach out and try and fill the remaining slots however being a weekend and the short time frame to get these people on the ground we will go with 12.
- OEM will travel all – we are working with FCS and the arriving airport is Sacramento, Sunday, February 2, 2020
- Due to the late and ever changing playing field it would be too late to enter all our folks into the HHS travel system so it is easier for OEM to travel these individuals
- HHS will provide the lodging and all ground transportation and support
- The DEMPS team will be located on Travis AFB in a secure location
- The team is due to arrive Sunday afternoon and spend Monday receiving fit testing and PPE training
- CDC is flying in a specialized team (arriving Sunday) to conduct all the training and education for the DEMPS team
- The AEM in the area will be embedded in the HHS IMT for the duration of the mission. He is due to receive his deployment physical (new OEM process) on Monday morning and will report to the IMT Monday afternoon
- While on ground the DEMPS team will be constantly monitored. While screening and throughout the deployment they will be monitored by CDC and HHS physicians
- CDC and HHS has assured us that as long as PPE protocols are strictly followed, there are no breaks in the integrity of PPE the chance of virus transmission to a screener is 0. There is no reported case of this type of transmission
- Once the DEMPS mission is over the team will be instructed on proper surveillance, they will self-monitor, take their temperature 2 times a day, report to CDC and will be advised in the event there are any concerns and the next steps
- We are awaiting the final details and instructions on how the DEMPS team should brief and inform their families.

I have pressed the issue and my concern for these VHA employees and I have been assured at each step there is little to no risk for infection. HHS and CDC are very grateful for VHA stepping up to assist with this response and have made this fact known to the White House.

The OEM team is in good spirits, we have split the team up this weekend and we have brought in AEMs to support us here in Martinsburg and to support Larry Mole. I have also checked and all marriages are still intact.

I will provide any updates today and throughout the rest of the weekend. If there are any concerns with this plan I am available for any discussions.

Paul D. Kim, MD  
Director  
VHA Office of Emergency Management  
304-264-(b)(6) Office



202-503 (b)(6) Cell

**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Sat, 29 Feb 2020 15:02:27 +0000  
**To:** Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO; Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO; Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO; Reeves, Randy; Ratchford Jr, Lewis; Tucker, Brooks; Glynn, Melissa S.; Rychalski, Jon J.; Mason, Cheryl; Lapuz, Miguel H.; Wiggins, Leslie B.; Gigliotti, Ralph; Missal, Michael J. (OIG); Davis, Lynda; Stone, Richard A., MD; Christy, Phillip (SES); Jackson, Frederick R.; Powers, Pamela; RLW; Hipolit, Richard (OGC); Sitterly, Daniel; Gfrerer, James; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP); (b)(6) Hutton, James (b)(6) DM; Bader, Christine E.; Smith, Jeffrey M.; Mayo, Jeffrey; Hudson, William A. (OGC); Mashburn, John K.  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
 (b)(6) (OIG) (b)(6); Huweart, Eric D.; (b)(6) (CFM); (b)(6)  
 (b)(6)  
**Subject:** SECVA Weekend Summary Report for February 29, 2020



Good Morning,

The current SECVA Weekend-Summary Report is below.

National Terror Advisory System	COGCON	Baseline Force Protection Condition		
		NORTHCOM	EUCOM	PACOM
(b)(7)(E)				

1. **Executive Summary**

- Monitoring outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

2. **Significant Weather** *Source: NWS*

- Mixed wintry precipitation possible for portions of the Tennessee and Ohio valleys and Southern Appalachians.
- Heavy Lake Effect Snow downwind from Lake Erie and Ontario for portions of NY.

3. **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)** *Source: HHS, CDC, WHO, VHA, VBA*

- As of 0600 ET, 29 Feb, the WHO reports 85,402 confirmed cases globally; 2,924 deaths throughout 54 countries.
- The CDC reports the total confirmed cases in the US is 62: 15 presenting in US; three among evacuees from Hubei Province; 44 among evacuees from Diamond Princess.

- As of 26 Feb, the Korea Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Field Office on Camp Humphreys is closed, most of the staff will telework.
- POTUS announced VPOTUS will oversee National Level COVID-19 Task Force. Ambassador Debbie Birx has been appointed to serve as White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator.
- FDA monitoring PPE supply reports from manufacturers; no PPE shortages currently identified despite media reports.
- **VA Response Efforts**
  - If needed, Palo Alto VAMC created a ward to provide care for repatriated COVID-19 Veterans from Travis AFB, CA.
  - VA LNO (AEM) is on-site to coordinate services for Veterans that arrived from the Diamond Princess cruise ship at Lackland AFB, TX.
  - Five Nursing Assistants supporting repatriation operations at Travis AFB, CA.
  - VA LNO is on-site at the HHS SOC to coordinate VA and HHS response efforts.
- VA provided guidance for all VA TAP Field Staff: Effective 26 Feb, and for a period of 30 days, travel is suspended for in-person support to VA TAP events at itinerant sites in the following countries; South Korea, Japan, and Italy.
- VA Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness (OSP) will stand-up a Crisis Action Team (Lite) to take questions from the field and serve as the future planning cell for non-medical actions on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1500 ET.
- Further details can be found in the COVID-19 VA SITREP produced daily by the VAIOC.

#### 4. Long Term Facility Disruptions

- **Blythe CBOC, CA** *Source: VHA*
  - 17 Jan, the property manager is working to get needed supplies to repair facility; estimated date of completion is the end of March.
  - On 30 Nov, the CBOC sustained extensive water damage from heavy rains.
  - An onsite MVC and telehealth capabilities are being used for care.
- **Arecibo CBOC, PR** *Source: VHA*
  - Operating from offices on the premises of the Manuel Petaca Iguina Coliseum.
- **Vieques Rural OPC, PR** *Source: VHA*
  - Operating from a PR Department of Health temporary clinical at Las Maria.
  - Preliminary occupancy date for the long-term lease replacement is June 20.

#### 5. Ten Day Outlook

- No known significant events affecting VA operations in the next ten days.

Approved by: (b)(6) Duty Officer  
 Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

V/R,

(b)(6)  
 VA Integrated Operations Center  
 Email: (b)(6)@va.gov

SIPRNet: (b)(6)@dhs.sgov.gov  
Tel: (202) 461-(b)(6) / (202) 219-(b)(6)  
Mobile: (202) 497-(b)(6)  
Fax: (202) 273-(b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Mon, 23 Mar 2020 13:54:10 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** FW: Quad and Talkers The Daily Signal  
**Attachments:** Quad - Fred Lucas - The Daily Signal\_updated.pptx, Supplemental Budget Talkers.docx, COVID-19 Talkers\_updated.docx

Printing these out now.

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**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 23, 2020 9:42 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** Cashour, Curtis (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Quad and Talkers The Daily Signal

Quad and talkers attached for this morning's 15 minute print interview with Fred Lucas of The Daily Signal.

(b)(6)  
Director, Media Affairs  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
202-774-(b)(6)

# 15 Minute Print Interview with Fred Lucas, The Daily Signal, Monday, March 23 at 10:30 a.m.



- **Fred Lucas** is the White House Correspondent for The Daily Signal and co-host of The Right Side of History Podcast. Lucas previously was White House correspondent for TheBlaze since August 2013 and worked as a reporter at CNS News for nearly seven years, five of them covering the White House. He covered the 2008, 2012, and 2016 presidential races, traveling to early primary states and reporting from party conventions.

## POTENTIAL QUESTIONS/TOPICSCOVID

-19

**OUTLET INFORMATION**The Daily SignalThe Daily Signal delivers investigative and feature reporting and the most important political news and commentary. The team is committed to truth and unmatched in knowledge of Washington's politics and policy debates. We tell these stories in formats that respect your time and intelligence.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**OUTLET:  
The Daily SignalREPORTER:  
Fred LucasCALL-IN PHONE: 202-875-  
(b)(6) SECONDARY PHONE: N/ADATE: Mon., March  
23, 2020, 10:30 a.m. (EST)ADDRESS: SecVA Office

**Supplemental Budget**

- (b)(5)

- 

**Why doesn't the supplemental include funding for VA's Fourth Mission?**

(b)(5)

**VA COVID-19 Response**

- (b)(5)
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

- (b)(5)

**What should Veterans do if they believe they may have contracted the coronavirus?**

- (b)(5)
- 
- 

**Fourth Mission**

- (b)(5)
- 
- 
- 
- 
-



**From:** Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.  
**Sent:** Wed, 11 Mar 2020 14:08:46 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** FW: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:07:11 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Cc:** (b)(6) Kim, Paul D., MD; Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.; Stone, Richard A., MD; Powers, Pamela; Sitterly, Daniel  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

(b)(6)

NNOC/NNU is requesting a separate call/briefing for just NNOC/NNU. The briefing/call should include VHA decision makers not just VACO LMR.

Additionally, we need answer to the below questions Now.

Finally, it is our intent to bargain over CO-VID 19.

(b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6) @va.gov>

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 9:34 AM

**To:** (b)(6) @nationalnursesunited.org>

**Cc:** (b)(6) @gmail.com> (b)(6)

(b)(6) nationalnursesunited.org (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6)

(b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; Kim, Paul D., MD

(b)(6) @va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Received. Thank you.

**From:** (b)(6) @nationalnursesunited.org>

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 9:31 AM

**To:** (b)(6) @va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6) @gmail.com>; (b)(6)

(b)(6) @nationalnursesunited.org> (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6)

(b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) @va.gov>; Kim, Paul D., MD

(b)(6) @va.gov>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

(b)(6)

Here are the questions again we submitted yesterday.

(b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 10:25 AM  
**To:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@gmail.com>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

H (b)(6)

I figured since we may have limited time on the briefing on Wednesday, I wanted to provide you questions ahead of time.

If you could please provide responses to each of these questions asap it would be appreciated.

1. What is VA plan for facilities that have insufficient amounts of PPE (N95/PAPR) currently to ensure the safety of RNs, healthcare workers, veterans and the prevention of the spread of COVID 19?
2. What is the VA plan if there is not enough staff to take care of patients due to exposure causing staff to quarantine?
3. Is VA going to be testing RNs and employees for COVID 19? If so, when?
4. What is the plan in each facility to notify the staff when there is either confirmed COVID 19 or suspected case?
5. What is plan/protocol/questions for screening patients, staff, visitors upon entry to the hospital. If they answer yes to any question that they might be symptomatic for COVID 19, what is the protocol then?
6. What is the VA policy on quarantining of employees who have traveled to China, South Korea, Iran or Italy recently?
7. What is the VA policy for those employees who have interacted with other employees who now being quaranted due to interaction with those who have tested positive for COVID 19?
8. Do the medical centers now have full authority to grant weather and safety leave for up to 15 days for anyone needing to be quarantined? If so, please define who you believe is subject to quarantine?

Thanks,

(b)(6)

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**From:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 9, 2020 8:49 AM

**To:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Cc:** (b)(6)@gmail.com>; (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Good morning (b)(6)

I sincerely apologize. The Dr. who will be giving the brief is deployed on the team to manage COVID-19. I have not received date(s) of his availability for a briefing to date. I followed up with his EA again this morning and will get back to you as soon as I hear something.

---

**From:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 6, 2020 8:47 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6)@gmail.com>; (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

(b)(6)

We are starting to hear about change in protocols related to screenings of staff, patients, and visitors, Telework being used, usage of leave and other issues.

To that end, when will NNOC.NNU be briefed on COVID 19?

(b)(6)

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**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 5, 2020 11:39 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Cc:** (b)(6)@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Good morning (b)(6)

Just FYSA, I was assigned this RFI today. I will reach out to the responsible program office to obtain the information. Also, just an update, as of 1138 EST 3-5-20, I am still waiting on date/time from the SME regarding the informational briefing on the Corona Virus.

r/ (b)(6)

---

**From:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 3, 2020 11:26 AM

**To:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org; (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org; (b)(6)comcast.net;>  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) CIV USN (USA)  
(b)(6)@navy.mil>; (b)(6)va.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Hi (b)(6)

I wanted to follow up on the email below as we have recently seen an All Employee Message from Dr. Stone today, but there was no mention of VA facilities being used to house travelers who are being quarantined.

Please provide us an update asap, as well as the information requested below.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

---

**From:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 2, 2020 2:28 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org; (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org; (b)(6)comcast.net>; (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

It is my understanding that the Department of Veterans Affairs is entertaining housing travelers who are currently under quarantine due to exposure to the Corona virus. We are deeply concerned that moving these travelers to VA medical facilities poses a grave danger to nurses, staff, veterans, as well as the general population.

It is our understanding that the medical staff has not been trained on dealing with patients who may be infected with this virus. We are also deeply concerned the VA has not trained staff on the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Additionally, there is a question as to whether the VA has the appropriate PPE. We have sent the below information request to each of the 23 facilities we represent and are awaiting response. Given the concerns raised above I am escalating this request to your office for immediate response.

Information requested:

1. Facilities that are designated as quarantine housing sites for travelers who have entered the U.S. from China. As well as start date, duration .

2. The Facility plan for disaster preparedness and response in the case of mass influx of patients or mass casualty incident;
2. The Facility Infection Control Guidelines, Policies, and other related documents regarding treatment, surveillance, and isolation precautions for patients with known or suspected Novel Coronavirus;
3. The Facility plan for exposure surveillance, prompt notification, and isolation (if indicated) of employees with occupational exposure to Novel Coronavirus;
4. The Facility Infection Control Guidelines, Policies, and other related documents regarding employees working while exhibiting signs and/or symptoms of Novel Coronavirus and/or any potentially communicable disease;
5. Any and all training and education materials, whether written, delivered via electronic means, or provided by in-person instructor(s) regarding Novel Coronavirus, including screening for symptoms and travel history that may indicate the need for further screening and/or isolation, as well as general information about Novel Coronavirus infection and treatment;
6. The number of available airborne isolation (negative pressure) rooms in the Facility;
7. Current stock on hand of N95 respirators and powered air-purifying respirators (PAPRS) as well as gowns, gloves, and other PPE for droplet and aerosol precautions;
8. Please provide a list of areas that could be used to isolate a patient with suspected or possible 2019-nCoV infections if an airborne isolation room is not available;
9. The Facility procedure(s) used to determine daily whether negative pressure is maintained with the airborne isolation room is in use;
10. Has the Facility identified any possible cases of 2019-nCoV? If so, how many?
11. The Facility's plans to adjust staffing to address the additional staff time required to properly care for multiple patients in airborne isolation; and
12. The Facility Attendance Policy and any revisions to the Attendance Policy made in order to address employees with documented exposure or known/suspected Novel Coronavirus.

We understand that this is a developing situation. To the extent that educational materials, supply levels, and policies may be in flux, please consider this information request to be ongoing and provide additional materials as they become available.

Particularized need:

1. Determine if the Hospital is complying with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, as well as all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations;
2. Determine if all RNs are being effectively protected from infectious disease exposure;
3. Determine the most appropriate representational course of action to take in this matter;
4. Fulfill the Union's representation responsibilities;  
The Union will use this information to assess the Facility's preparedness for the current Novel Coronavirus outbreak and its impact upon RNs employed at the Facility.

If any part of this request is denied, or if any material is unavailable, please communicate that fact to me in writing, along with the reason(s) for the denial or unavailability of the requested information, and please provide the remaining items by the same date. The Union will accept partial fulfillment of this information request without prejudice to its position that we are entitled to all documents and information called for in the request.

The Union reserves the right to request additional information if necessary. To the extent that any of the above information can be provided in electronic format, please do so.

**From:** Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.  
**Sent:** Fri, 13 Mar 2020 15:23:32 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** FW: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2020 11:22:49 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.; Stone, Richard A., MD  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
Kim, Paul D., MD; (b)(6)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fw: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Dr. Stone

Please see the questions below from my email of March 10th.

We still have not received a response to any of these questions to date. Frankly, it's unacceptable that we are in a pandemic situation and VHA is too busy to answer basic questions when we have RNs putting their lives at risk while VA is either unwilling and/or unprepared to answer basic questions that will ensure the safety of RNs and the patients who they are taking care of.

Right now, there are VA hospitals having RNs and healthcare workers screen patients at entrances without providing them PPE protection or providing protocols for this process. This is just one of many concerns we currently have. VA is putting both patients and the workers at risk now.

We immediately would like a meeting with you and your staff to address our concerns because on the calls we have with VACO LMR, no one from that office can tell us anything, other than they will share our concerns with VHA.

We looking forward to hearing from you.

(b)(6)

Thanks,

(b)(6)

(b)(6) Lead National Representative  
National Nurses United- NNU  
[www.nationalnursesunited.org](http://www.nationalnursesunited.org)

Tel: 646-460-(b)(6) Fax: 212-624-(b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 10:25 AM

**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6)@gmail.com>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)  
(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov  
(b)(6)@va.gov>

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**Cc:** (b)(6)@gmail.com>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6)@va.gov> (b)(6)

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**Cc:** (b)(6)@gmail.com; (b)(6)  
<(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

(b)(6)

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r (b)(6)

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**To:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org; (b)(6)  
<(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org; (b)(6)@comcast.net;  
(b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6) CIV USN (USA)  
(b)(6)@navy.mil; (b)(6)@va.gov  
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(b)(6)

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**Cc:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@comcast.net>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
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**From:** Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.  
**Sent:** Mon, 16 Mar 2020 20:43:01 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** FW: Union Response to Agency Position  
**Attachments:** VA Union Response to Agency Position re Negotiability final 3.16.2020.pdf, Attachment 1- Settlement Agreement.pdf, Attachment 2- NFFE Ground rules signed.pdf, Attachment 3 EXECUTED Decision Order 19 FSIP 024.pdf, Attachment 4 7422 Docket.pdf, Attachment 4 7422 Order Admin Record Refile MSJs.pdf

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2020 4:40:34 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** (b)(6) (OGC); Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Union Response to Agency Position

Attached is the Union's response to the Agency's position in this matter. Please note that NFFE staff is on telework status for an indefinite period of time. We request all service upon the union be done via email.

(b)(6)

*Associate General Counsel  
National Federation of Federal Employees, IAMAW*

***DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, NFFE HEADQUARTERS STAFF IS ON TELEWORK STATUS FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME.***

***PLEASE SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE VIA EMAIL AND CONTACT ME VIA CELL PHONE: 407-913-9321.***



**FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES,  
(Union)

and

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS AFFAIRS  
(Agency)

0-NG-3471

**UNION'S RESPONSE TO AGENCY'S STATEMENT OF POSITION**

*/s/Suzanne Summerlin*  
Associate General Counsel,  
National Federation of Federal  
Employees,  
IAMAW, AFL-CIO  
202-216-4451  
[ssummerlin@nffe.org](mailto:ssummerlin@nffe.org)

On or about February 14, 2020 the US Department of Veterans Affairs (Agency or VA) served its Statement of Position regarding the above-captioned Negotiability challenge filed by the National Federation of Federal Employees (Union or NFFE). Herein, the Union provides its response to the Agency's Statement of Position.

### **Part I: Background and Threshold Issues**

In May 2015, NFFE sent notice to the VA of its intent to reopen the NFFE-VA Master Agreement. The parties eventually began negotiating ground rules, which were nearing completion in late January 2017. In early February 2017, NFFE gave notice to the VA that it was rescinding its request to negotiate the Master Agreement. In July 2017, the Agency filed an unfair labor practice charge (FLRA Case WA-CA-17-0418) against NFFE alleging a failure to bargain in good faith (the "ULP Charge").

On or about January 31, 2018, the parties entered into a private settlement agreement (the "Settlement Agreement") resolving the ULP Charge. Attachment 1. The Settlement Agreement, as proposed by the Agency, allowed the parties to designate up to four (4) articles for renegotiation, and then each party could strike one article selected by the other party, securing it as-is and protecting it from being opened for negotiations. The Union agreed to the proposal, as it would allow the Union to protect official time, as governed by Article 2. The Settlement Agreement provided that the Union would immediately sign the Ground Rules as written but modified to include that the Union will pay travel and per diem for preparation time. The Settlement Agreement further modified the Ground Rules by placing limits on which provisions of the CBA would be available to negotiate: "Each party will select no more than four (4) articles they are interested in bargaining. The opposing side will have the opportunity to strike one of the other party's four

articles from negotiations.” Attachment 1. The Union signed the Ground Rules on February 1, 2018. Attachment 2. The FLRA was not a party to the Settlement Agreement.

On March 9, 2018, NFFE and the VA exchanged proposals for contract negotiations. Pursuant to the Settlement Agreement, each party submitted four articles for negotiation. The Agency gave notice of its intent to reopen three articles: (1) Article 2, Union Rights and Representation; (2) Article 25, Actions Based on Unacceptable Performance; and (3) Article 26, Disciplinary Actions, Adverse Actions, and Major Adverse Actions. Further, the VA gave notice of its intent to include a newly proposed article to negotiate: Article XX, Official Time. Article XX contains provisions essentially rewriting Article 2. NFFE chose to reopen: (1) Article 10, Partnership/Collaborative Relationships; (2) Article 5, Grievance Procedure; (3) Article 8, Negotiations, and (4) Article 24, Performance Appraisal System.

The parties began bargaining on April 29, 2018 and on April 30, 2018, NFFE struck the Agency’s proposed Article 2 from bargaining. Bargaining on the articles subject to the Settlement Agreement took place over approximately 40 bargaining sessions. On December 9, 2018, the parties mutually went to mediation before FMCS Mediator Randy Mayhew. The Mediator released the parties on February 27, 2019, in FMCS Case No. 201911770013. The Union and Agency each filed requests for FSIP assistance.

On or about September 4, 2019, FSIP issued its decision in the impasse between the Union and Agency. *See* 19 FSIP 024. FSIP imposed “compromised” proposals where it accepted most of the Agency’s positions. A CBA comporting with FSIP’s Final Decision and Order was ratified by the Union on or about November 6, 2019. On December 12, 2019, the VA Secretary Robert Wilkie furnished the Union and Agency representative Robyn Stanton (no longer with the Agency) with its Agency Head Review. Attachment 3 (the AHR is dated December 5, 2019 but was not sent to



the Union or Ms. Stanton until December 12, 2019). The Union timely filed this Negotiability Appeal on December 17, 2019. The Union timely exercised its right to file a negotiability appeal based on language rejected at Agency Head Review, pursuant to the Ground Rules and statute. The Union's filing of this Negotiability Appeal conforms with the parties' Ground Rules because the Union and Agency had both exhausted all other avenues – including more than 40 sessions of bargaining, impasse procedures, ULPs, grievance arbitrations, and FMCS mediation.

## **Part II: Argument**

### **1. The Alleged “7422 Determination” is Invalid**

In its Statement of Position, the Agency raises a lawsuit filed by the undersigned on behalf of NFFE and the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE). This lawsuit is wholly unrelated to the bargaining done in this matter. The Agency bargained the provisions of this CBA before, during, and after the alleged “7422 Determination” made in November 2018 (and the second one made in April 2019) and never sought to carve out an exception for Title 38 employees in the CBA. The alleged “7422 Determination” was not raised at FSIP, despite the Agency's opportunity to do so.

Litigation regarding the alleged “7422 Determination” is pending in federal court. It has been pending for more than a year, despite being fully briefed, because Agency attorneys have failed to file any sort of Administrative Record on which the Court may make a determination of fact and law – defying two direct orders from the Court. Attachment 4.

The FLRA is not divested of jurisdiction to determine that it was perfectly legal for the Agency to voluntarily bargain the rights of Title 38 employees after the “7422 Determination” was issued in November 2018. The Agency made choices throughout bargaining and chose to bargain the rights of all employees covered by the CBA – Title 38 employees and others. The Agency

bargained for these appropriate arrangements and may not unilaterally switch course based on an unsubstantiated “7422 Determination” which was issued with no supporting documentation or reasoning in the middle of bargaining and never brought to the bargaining table. The “7422 Determination” does not pass muster as a valid agency action and does not preclude the FLRA from doing its duty in this matter.

To the extent the Agency insists on litigating the validity of its “7422 Determination” in this matter, such determination is arbitrary, capricious, contrary to law, and unsupported by substantial evidence. It is well established that Title 38 employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs enjoy collective bargaining rights, and these rights are limited by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs' authority under 38 U.S.C. § 7422 to determine that certain demands are not subject to bargaining because they implicate "professional conduct or competence"— defined to encompass "direct patient care." *See NFFE v. McDonald*, 128 F. Supp. 3d. 159, 161.

However, the Agency’s decision to repudiate portions of its contracts via its “7422 Determination” violates the Administrative Procedures Act because it fails to reflect reasoned decision making. The Agency: (1) crafted a clearly erroneous interpretation of Section 7422 that stretches the purpose of the statute far beyond Congress’ intent and conflicts with the policies underlying the statute; (2) failed to follow any semblance of the normal Section 7422 review process; and (3) failed to present any competent evidence to support its repudiation.

The Agency knew or at least suspected that the Plaintiffs’ claim under the APA would be sustained, so it issued another “determination” in April 2019 as an attempt to cure the first. Unfortunately for the Agency, the Second Determination’s attempts to post-hoc rationalize the repudiation also fail to pass muster under the APA.

If the Agency is permitted to apply the term “direct patient care” in Section 7422 to any condition of employment touching upon a medical center or its employees, to the point where Title 38 employees can never receive the bargained-for benefit of official time, or serve as union representatives, this precedent will “whittle the scope of bargaining so drastically as to render collective bargaining meaningless.” *Nat’l Treasury Employees Union v. Chertoff*, 452 F.3d 839, 861 (D.C. Cir. 2006).

The Agency asserts that the FLRA is divested of authority over this negotiability matter simply because the Agency has made its own unilateral declaration of repudiation. No such authority is cited for this assertion, because no such authority exists. To allow as such would be to undermine the entire purpose of Congress’ intent when it declared Title 38 employees (and Title 38 hybrids) to have bargaining rights and union representation rights as Title 5 employees.

## **2. The Union Has Not Withdrawn Any Claims in this Matter**

The Agency baselessly asserts that the Union has withdrawn claims in this matter. It writes that “NFFE filed a second petition on or about January 17, 2020 and that petition omitted certain provisions that were included in the initial petition filed in December 2019. The Union has not, and is not, waiving its challenge to any of the provisions that it has filed for relief on in this matter. The Agency fails to assert which, if any, provisions were “omitted” but to the extent any have been omitted by clerical error, the Union seeks leave to amend and clarify its timely filed petition.

## **3. Agency Head Review Cannot Disapprove Agreements Based Solely on the Permissiveness of the Subject**

Once an Agency determines it will bargain over a permissive subject, Agency Head Review cannot override that decision. *Nat’l Treasury Emples. Union*, 65 F.L.R.A. 509, 512 (2011) (“...the mere fact that a proposal is outside the duty to bargain does not mean that it is contrary to law, rule, or regulation.”). Once an agency’s negotiators have chosen to reach an agreement

concerning a permissive subject, the agency cannot later undo that choice for the duration of the agreement. *See Ass'n of Civilian Technicians, Mont. Air Chapter No. 29 v. FLRA*, 22 F.3d 1150, 1155-56 (D.C. Cir. 1994).

Here, the Agency chose to engage in bargaining over subjects which are permissive. *See for example*, Article 8 “Negotiations”, Article 24 “Performance Appraisal”; Article 36 “Training”. This is not undone by Executive Order 13836. The consequence of the Agency bargaining over permissive subjects in light of an alleged prohibition on bargaining such subjects issued by the executive is a matter between the executive and the Agency. It does not, and cannot, be found to undo the bargaining conducted between the Agency and the Union.

#### **4. The Executive Orders were Issued without Statutory Authority**

Not all executive orders have the force of law. *E.g., Chen v. Carroll*, 866 F. Supp. 283, 287 (E.D. Va. 1994). For an executive order to be considered a “law” it must have “a distinct statutory foundation.” *Ass'n for Women in Science v. Califano*, 566 F.2d 339, 344 (D.C. Cir. 1977). In the two (2) Executive Orders at issue in this negotiability appeal, Exec. Order No. 13,837 and 13,839, the President cites 5 U.S.C. § 7301 as one of the main authorities to issue the orders. The Union, among others, challenged the Executive Orders in *AFGE v. Trump*, 318 F. Supp. 3d 370 (D.D.C. 2018). The District Court issued an injunction preventing application of the Executive Orders, which was overruled by the D.C. Circuit on jurisdictional grounds only. *AFGE v. Trump*, 929 F.3d 748 (D.C. Cir. 2019). Litigation concerning the Executive Orders is still pending in other federal courts and has not yet been dismissed on jurisdictional grounds. *See for example SEIU Local 200 et al v. Trump et al*, Civ. Doc. No. 1:19-cv-01073-EAW (W.D.N.Y. – Buffalo); *NAAE v. Trump et al*, Civ. Doc. No. 8:19-cv-03057-GJH (S.D.Md.).

Section 7301 does not provide the President with broad authority to issue Executive Orders implementing the Statute. On the contrary, it specifically allows the President to “prescribe regulations for the *conduct* of employees in the executive branch.” (emphasis added). Under this authority, past presidents have issued executive orders addressing federal employee drug use (Exec. Order No. 12,564, 51 Fed. Reg. 32889 (Sept. 15, 1986)); federal employee ethics (Exec. Order No. 12,674, 54 Fed. Reg. 15159 (April 12, 1989) and Exec. Order No. 13,770, 82 Fed. Reg. 9333 (Jan. 28, 2017)); smoking in the federal workplace (Exec. Order 13,058, 65 Fed. Reg. 43451 (Aug. 9, 1997)); and the investigation of federal employees for positions of public trust (Exec. Order No. 13,488, 74 Fed. Reg. 4111 (Jan. 16, 2009)).

Union official time and the other aspects of the Executive Orders addressed herein are not *conduct* issues. Regarding official time, the Supreme Court has noted that union representatives are not “acting in their ‘official capacity,’ ‘on the job,’ or in a ‘duty status’” while on official time. *Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms v. F.L.R.A.*, 464 U.S. 89, 105 (1983) (hereinafter *BATF*). While some provisions of Exec. Order No. 13,839 address employee conduct issues, Section 3, “Standard for Negotiating Grievance Procedures,” and Section 4 (exempting certain matters from the scope of the negotiated grievance procedures) address solely collective bargaining issues, not employee conduct.

Moreover, Courts have uniformly concluded in cases specifically addressing the Statute that such executive orders “were not legislative.” *Karahalios v. NFFE, Local 1263*, 489 U.S. 527, 535 n.3 (1989). The Court cited *Kuhn v. Nat’l Assoc. of Letter Carriers, Branch 5*, 570 F.2d 757, 760-61 (8th Cir. 1978). This Eighth Circuit decision, in turn, cited the decisions of numerous circuits for the proposition that Exec. Order No. 11,491, which governed Federal sector labor relations immediately prior to the enactment of the Statute, “was not issued under statutory

authority.” *Id.* Similarly, the Third Circuit also specifically held that 5 U.S.C. § 7301 did not provide President Nixon with the statutory authority to issue Exec. Order No. 11,491:

In seeking to regulate labor relations in the federal government and internal matters of unions representing federal government employees, Executive Order No. 11491 was not issued under statutory authority providing for presidential implementation or effectuation of statutory provisions. We recognize that 5 U.S.C. § 7301 provides that: "The President may prescribe regulations for the conduct of employees in the executive branch." However, we do not read that statute as providing the necessary congressional authority to constitute Executive Order No. 11491 as a "law of the United States" within the meaning of § 1331. . . § 7301 has no such relationship with the substance of Executive Order No. 11491. Hence, while Executive Order No. 11491 regulates and implements federal government personnel policies, it does so solely as a product of executive authority and not as a consequence of congressional law making.

*Local 1498, AFGE v. AFGE*, 522 F.2d 486, 491 (3rd Cir. 1975) (internal citations and footnotes omitted). The first executive order establishing federal sector collective bargaining, Exec. Order No. 10,988, was issued by President Kennedy in 1962. This executive order cited predecessor § 7301, 5 U.S.C. § 631 as its authority. Nevertheless, the D.C. Circuit wrote:

Executive Order 10, 988 represents in essence a formulation of broad policy by the President for the guidance of federal employing agencies. *It had no specific foundation in Congressional action, nor was it required to effectuate any statute.* It could have been withdrawn at any time for any or no reason. It represented simply one President's effort to move in the direction of what he had been advised by his experts would be an improvement in the efficiency of federal employment.

*Manhattan-Bronx Postal Union v. Gronouski*, 350 F.2d 451, 456 (D.C. Cir. 1965).

Finally, even if § 7301 provided statutory authority for earlier presidents to issue executive orders governing federal sector collective bargaining, that general authority was rescinded when Congress enacted a more specific statute in 1978 comprehensively governing Federal sector labor relations. “[T]he Executive may obviously not rely on the broad wording of one law to achieve ends expressly foreclosed to it or permitted to it only under specified conditions by a more specific statutory directive.” *AFGE v. Freeman*, 498 F.Supp. 651, 658 (D.D.C. 1980). (GSA may not issue

regulations pursuant to Presidential statement and OMB circular charging federal employees for parking under the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act as part of energy conservation plan, when Energy Policy and Conservation Act required President to submit all energy conservation plans to Congress for approval).

Ironically, the very purpose of the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations statutory scheme was to prevent the whims of the President from dictating federal labor management issues as he has done here.<sup>1</sup> Because the President lacks power to issue the Executive Orders, they are not valid government rules and regulations.

#### 5. **The Executive Orders Conflict with the Statute and are *Ultra Vires***

Even if it is found that the President retains authority to issue executive orders regulating the relations between the federal government and its employee unions, the Executive Orders must still be set aside if their terms conflict with the Statute. *Chamber of Commerce v. Reich*, 74 F.3d 1322, 1332-34 (D.C. Cir. 1996). The executive order provisions cited in the Agency’s Statement of Position, and the Agency Head Review, conflict with both the plain text and the Statute as interpreted by the FLRA and the courts.

##### a. **Executive Order 13837 Conflicts with the Statutory Right to Negotiate How Much Official Time is Reasonable**

The Agency cites Executive Order 13837 to argue that many of the provisions at issue are nonnegotiable. These cited sections limit or prohibit official time, among other things, in direct

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<sup>1</sup> The overall purpose of the Statute was to divest the President of authority to regulate federal sector labor relations through executive orders. Congress granted the President only the authority to remove certain groups of employees from coverage of the Statute for national security reasons. 5 U.S.C. § 7103(b). Representative Clay said that the Statute “provides for [a] statutory federal labor-management program which cannot be universally altered by any President.” 124 Cong. Rec. H 9637 (daily ed. Sept 13, 1978). He explained that those who testified before his Subcommittee on the Civil Service overwhelmingly supported a statutory federal labor relations program “because the existing program was susceptible to the whims of an incumbent President.” 124 Cong. Rec. H 8466 (daily ed. Aug. 11, 1978). Representative Derwinski explained that Congress’ objective was to codify the [Executive Order] system into statutes which cannot, like Executive orders, be revoked by the White House at will.” 124 Cong. Rec. H 9639 (daily ed. Sept 13, 1978).

conflict with 5 U.S.C § 7131. Because these EO provisions patently conflict with federal statute, they cannot be lawfully enforced.

The Statute specifically covers the topic of official time and the terms and scope of bargaining regarding the right of employees to engage in union activities during duty time. 5 U.S.C. § 7131(a) and (c) provide a list of certain activities for which employees are entitled to official time, namely, for negotiating a collective bargaining agreement and participating before the FLRA. 5 U.S.C. § 7131(b) that official time cannot be used for activities related to internal union business. 5 U.S.C. § 7131(d) grants agencies and unions broad authority to bilaterally negotiate amounts of official time for bargaining unit employees to conduct representational activities that are “reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest.” *See also BATF*, 464 U.S. at 99 (defining “official time” as the right of employees to receive their “usual pay” during union-related matters).

Notably, Congress did not establish individual or bargaining unit limits in Section 7131(d). Yet, these new provisions of Executive Order 13837 expressly limit negotiations on official time usage. Specifically, Section 4(a)(i) prohibits lobbying activities during official time and Section 4(a)(v) prohibits the use of official time to prepare or pursue grievances on behalf of the union or other union members. In addition, Executive Order 13837 instructs agencies not to provide the union with government space or equipment (cited by the Agency to find proposal 3, Article 20.01-20.04, nonnegotiable), or reimburse the union for expenses incurred while performing activities on official time. *See* Sections 4(a)(iii) – (iv). The Order also mandates that official time cannot comprise more than twenty-five percent of a union employee’s duty time (any excess time will count towards the limit in subsequent fiscal years) and management approval must be obtained before any official time can be used at all. *See* Exec. Order No. 13,837, Sections 4(a)(ii) and 4(b).



Courts and the FLRA have decided that each of the matters discussed above falls within the scope of the right to bargain that Congress sought to protect when it enacted the Statute. Specifically, Art 2, Sec. 5(A) providing for travel and per diem for union representatives, has been found to be a mandatory subject of bargaining absent the Executive Orders. *See BATF*, 464 U.S. 89, 107 n.17 (financial support to union members is negotiable during collective bargaining). Articles XX, 2, 21, 27 and 37 all deal with official time amounts that the parties found to be reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest, yet were disapproved because of Executive Order 13837. Again, this topic has been found to be a mandatory subject of bargaining. *See Dep't of the Air Force Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.*, 2016 WL 3548040, at \*13 (May 31, 2016) (a party is free “to advocate for what it believes to be the proper amount of official time”); *Am. Fed'n Gov't Emps. Council of Locals No. 214 v. F.L.R.A.*, 798 F.2d 1525 (D.C. Cir. 1986) (finding even 100% official time a mandatory subject of bargaining). Further, the ways in which official time can be used by union representatives, is another instance where the law and Executive Orders conflict. *Am. Fed'n of Gov't Emps. Nat'l Council of Field Labor Locals*, 39 F.L.R.A. 546, 553 (1991) (how official time may be used is open to negotiation).

In effect, these sections of the Executive Order remove matters from the various topics that Congress left open to bargain. Considering these all together, the removal of these matters diminishes the scope of bargaining that the Statute was designed to allow. *See National Treasury Employees Union v. Chertoff*, 452 F.3d 839, 861–62 (D.C. Cir. 2006) (concluding that the removal of just six matters illegally diminished the scope of bargaining anticipated in the statute).

In *Chertoff*, the D.C. Circuit established that an agency's reduction of the matters that would otherwise be subject to negotiations deprives the union of the right to bargain collectively, and thereby violates the statute. *Chertoff*, 452 F.3d at 844. Both the number of matters affected

and the importance of the subjects that the orders target are of consideration when assessing whether the Executive Order provisions conflict with the Statute. *Id.*

Official time to assist employees in the grievance process is at the heart of union activity. The gains that workers achieve would not have been possible without the enforcement of union contracts and assisting individual members in the grievance process. *See, e.g., Vaca v. Sipes*, 386 U.S. 171, 194 (1967).

Collective bargaining over material support is also negotiable for a number of reasons, including the fact that such support helps equalize the availability of resources between management and labor. *See Dep't of the Navy Naval Constr. Battalion Ctr. Port Hueneme, Cal.*, 14 F.L.R.A. 360, 372 (1984); *see also BATF*, 464 U.S. at 104 (noting that provisions of the act “aim at equalizing the positions of management and labor”); *id.* at 101–02 (recognizing that the justifications for allowing federal employees to perform union work during duty time have historically centered on needing “to maintain a reasonable policy with respect to union self-support[.]” and on the principle that union members “should be allowed official time to carry out their statutory representational activities just as management uses official time to carry out its responsibilities.” With the Executive Orders in place, however, the Union’s right to negotiate on topics such as official time and financial resources is significantly diminished, as seen here, where the Agency declares those topics to be nonnegotiable. Moreover, the statutory right to bargain is also significantly disturbed where management is given the right to pre-approve union representatives’ use of official time. *See Exec. Order No. 13,387 § 4(b)*. This right gives management control over when and if official time is used, which effectively shifts the determination of what is “reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest” away from both parties and into the hand of management alone.

These new “rules” artificially and preliminarily determine what is “reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest,” eviscerating the carefully constructed statutory scheme whereby Congress left it to the agencies and unions to make such determinations through bilateral agreement. In addition, the removal of the above matters from the array of topics that Congress has placed on the bargaining table in the Statute reduces the scope of the protected right to bargain in an impermissible manner.

**b. Executive Order 13839 Impermissibly Excludes Subjects of Bargaining Mandated by Congress in Section 7121 of the Statute**

Executive Order 13839 operates to take many critical subjects off the collective bargaining table in direct contravention of 5 U.S.C. § 7121. Congress specifically mandated a broad scope grievance procedure to enable maximum problem resolution, excluding only a few matters while allowing the parties to negotiate additional exclusions where warranted. 5 U.S.C. § 7121.

It is well established that grievance procedures exist to “safeguard the participation rights of individual employees and unions... .” *Am. Fed’n of Gov’t Emps., Locals 225, 1504, and 3723 AFL-CIO v. Fed. Labor Relations Auth.*, 712 F.2d 640, 641 (D.C. Cir. 1983), and the Statute finds that such participation is “in the public interest,” 5 U.S.C. § 7101(a), so any reduction in the scope of negotiations regarding such procedures is potentially problematic from the standpoint of the boundaries that Congress has constructed. Moreover, while the parties may further limit the scope of bargaining, those additional limitations are subject to negotiations and cannot be unilaterally decided by one party. *See Dep’t of Def., Montana Air Nat’l Guard, Great Falls, MT and Ass’n of Civilian Technicians*, 00 FSIP 35 (2000); *NTEU v. Internal Revenue Service*, 27 F.L.R.A. 132, 135 (1987) (standing for the general premise that agencies must obtain agreement from the union to exclude additional subjects). In fact, the Federal Services Impasses Panel must impose a broad

scope grievance procedure unless the party seeking to narrow the scope can persuade it to do otherwise. *AFGE, Locals 225, 1504, & 3723, AFL-CIO v. FLRA*, 712 F.2d 640 (D.C. Cir. 1983).

Ultimately, Executive Order 13839 impermissibly interferes with the rights of federal agencies and federal employees to customize their collective bargaining agreements to the needs of the workforce and agency. Important subjects have been unilaterally removed from the bargaining table and other important subjects have been impermissibly circumscribed.

#### **6. The Executive Orders are Not Government Wide Rules Within the Meaning of § 7117**

The Agency argues that the Executive Orders are “government wide rules or regulations” upon which it has a valid reason to base its Agency Head Review / rejection of the affected contract provisions. The Agency is incorrect. To constitute a “government-wide rule or regulation,” the regulation must be “generally applicable throughout the Federal government, i.e., apply to the Federal civilian work force as a whole.” *National Treasury Employees Union, Chapter 6 and Internal Revenue Service, New Orleans District*, 3 F.L.R.A. 747, 755 (1980). “Congress intended that regulations which only apply to a limited segment of the Federal civilian workforce not serve to limit the duty to bargain.” *Id* at 754. As a House Committee report explained:

The term “Government-wide” shall be construed literally; only those regulations which affect the civilian work force as a whole are “Government-wide regulations. No other regulations may bar negotiations. Typically, it is anticipated, the issuing agency will be the Office of Personnel Management or the General Services Administration.

H. Rep. No. 95-1403, 95th Cong., 2nd Sess. 51-52 (1978).

The Executive Orders (particularly Exec. Order No. 13,837 regulating official time) apply only to a small segment of the Federal workforce - those employees acting as union representatives, and only while they are acting as union representatives; or they apply to Federal employee unions

as an institution, or to the unions' relationship with the government. They are not policies that govern working conditions of the civil service generally, as are the policies that the FLRA have generally found to constitute "government-wide rules and regulations." Such regulations are issued by Federal agencies pursuant to a Congressional directive to issue regulations implementing a Federal statute governing Federal employment. For example:

- OPM regulations establishing minimum waiting periods before promotion of General Schedule employees. *Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization and Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration*, 4 F.L.R.A. 232 (1980).
- General Services Administration's regulations governing reimbursement rates for Federal employee travel. *National Federation of Federation Employees Local 29 and Kansas City District Corps of Engineers*, 20 F.L.R.A. 543 (1985).
- OSHA health and safety regulations governing employment in Federal workplaces. *AFGE Local 1458 and Department of Justice, Office of the U.S. Attorney, Southern District of Florida*, 29 F.L.R.A. 3, 5 (1987).
- Department of State Standardized Regulations governing housing and other allowances for employees of all Federal agencies stationed overseas. *Overseas Education Association and Department of Defense Office of Dependent Schools*, 22 F.L.R.A. 351, 354 (1986).

Each of these and the other regulations which the FLRA have found to constitute "government-wide rules and regulations" that have precluded bargaining over proposal that are in conflict are facially neutral and were not issued with the explicit intent to limit the scope of bargaining. "[W]e have recognized some important limitations on the government's ability to diminish the scope of collective bargaining through government-wide regulations," wrote the Court of Appeals. *U.S. Dep't of Treasury, I.R.S. v. Fed. Labor Relations Auth.*, 996 F.2d 1246, 1251 (D.C. Cir. 1993).

Moreover, the Executive Orders cannot constitute "government-wide rules and regulations" because there are no corresponding "consultation rights" for the unions to exercise before they were issued. In exchange for precluding bargaining over proposals that conflict

“government-wide rules and regulations,” Congress granted unions the right to be consulted, and have their views considered, before those regulations are issued. 5 U.S.C. § 7117(d). Only an “agency” grants consultation rights over government-wide rules and regulations under § 7117<sup>2</sup>, and therefore Congress envisioned that it would only be an “agency” who would be issuing such regulations (and not the Executive) and that such consultation rights would be available before any matter was taken off the bargaining table. The FLRA has characterized this as “the concomitant right of a labor organization.” *NTEU Chapter 6*, 3 F.L.R.A. at 754. During debate, Subcommittee Chair Clay<sup>3</sup> explained:

In section 7117, the Udall substitute removes many Government-wide regulations from collective bargaining. We have agreed to this change with the understanding that the consultation rights accorded exclusive representatives are to be rigidly enforced. It should be clear from the contents of the agency statement required in subsection 7117(d)(3)(B) that the agency has in fact considered the views and recommendations of the labor organizations exercising consultation rights. A clear record is also necessary for later judicial review of the adequacy of the agency’s proceedings that led to the promulgation of the regulation.

124 Cong. Rec. H9638 (daily ed. Sept. 13, 1978). Thus, consultation rights were the *quid pro quo* for “government-wide rules and regulations,” and Congress intended the scope of “government-wide rules and regulations” would be co-extensive with the scope of consultations rights. And since, under the Statute and FLRA regulations, only agencies grant consultation rights and not the Executive Office of the President, and since the Plaintiff unions were not afford the opportunity to consult on the substance of the three Executive Orders before they were issued, the Executive Orders cannot qualify as “government-wide rules and regulations” within the meaning of § 7117.

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<sup>2</sup> See also FLRA regulations on how unions qualify for consultation rights, 5 C.F.R. Part 2426.11, 2426.12.

<sup>3</sup> The Court of Appeals has called Rep. Clay one of the “major players in the legislation” and has relied heavily on his remarks when interpreting the Statute and the scope of bargaining it creates. *Office of Personnel Management v. FLRA*, 864 F.2d 165, 169 (D.C. Cir. 1988).

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It is “a statement of black letter law” that ‘the President's power, if any, to issue executive orders must stem either from an act of Congress or from the Constitution itself.’ *Minnesota v. Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians*, 526 U.S. 172, 188–89 (1999), quoting *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer*, 343 U.S. 579, 585 (1952). An executive order that is either issued without legal authority, or which is in conflict with an act of Congress, may not be enforced. *Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians*, 526 U.S. at 189 (holding that the parties’ failure to point to any “colorable source for the President’s authority” meant that portion of the Executive Order directing removal of Native Americans was invalid); *Chamber of Commerce of the United States v. Reich*, 74 F.3d 1322, 1327-30 (D.C. Cir. 1996) (finding that an executive order disqualifying federal contractors who hire permanent striker replacements conflicts with National Labor Relations Act).

Therefore, because the Executive Orders upon which the Agency has based its rejection of many proposals herein were issued without statutory authority, in conflict with Chapter 71, are ultra vires, and do not constitute a valid government-wide rule, the executive orders cited by the Agency may not be enforced by the Authority.

## SERVICE OF UNION RESPONSE

The undersigned certifies that copies of the Union's Response to the Agency's Position, including all attachments, in the above-captioned case have been served on the following persons:

1. Robert Wilkie – VA Secretary
  - a. Date: 3.16.2020
  - b. Method: via email (by agreement pursuant to 5 CFR §2429.27(b)(6)) to [rwilkie@va.gov](mailto:rwilkie@va.gov)
  
2. Ryan Fulcher – Bargaining Representative
  - a. Date: 3.16.2020
  - b. Method: Email (by agreement pursuant to 5 CFR §2429.27(b)(6)) to [Ryan.Fulcher@va.gov](mailto:Ryan.Fulcher@va.gov)
  
3. Jeffery Whiting – Attorney for the VA
  - a. Date: 3.16.2020
  - b. Method: Email (by agreement pursuant to 5 CFR §2429.27(b)(6)) to [Jeffrey.Whiting@va.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.Whiting@va.gov)
  
4. FLRA Case Intake
  - a. Date: 3.16.2020
  - b. Method: via the e-file system

Dated: March 16, 2020

/s/ Suzanne Summerlin

Suzanne Summerlin  
Associate General Counsel  
National Federation of Federal  
Employees, FD-1, IAMAW  
1225 New York Ave, NW #450  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
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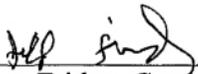
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (Agency) and the National Federation of Federal Employees, IAMAW, AFL-CIO (Union) (*collectively*, the Parties) agree to the following terms and conditions as full and complete settlement of the unfair labor practice charge in Case No. WA-CA-17-0418.

1. NFFE agrees to immediately sign the ground rules as written with the following modification: NFFE agrees to pay travel and per diem associated with preparation time. A copy of said ground rules are attached hereto as Exhibit 1.
2. The Parties agree to limit contract negotiations to no more than eight articles. Each party will select no more than four (4) articles they are interested in bargaining. The opposing side will have the opportunity to strike one of the other party's four articles from negotiations.
3. The Parties agree face-to-face bargaining will take place in the alternating locations of Atlanta, GA and Washington, DC.
4. NFFE agrees to post the attached Notice to Employees at all locations where its employees work.
5. In exchange for the Union's commitment to perform the above-referenced actions, the Agency agrees to immediately withdraw the unfair labor practice charge in Case No. WA-CA-17-0418.

For the Union:

For the Agency:

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jefferson Friday, General Counsel  
 National Federation of Federal Employees,  
 IAMAW, AFL-CIO

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Kimberly P. McLeod, Executive Director  
 Office of Labor-Management Relations

1/31/18  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

1/31/18  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
GROUND RULES

I. Preamble

- A. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by and between the Department of Veterans Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the Department or Agency) and the National Federation of Federal Employees, AFL-CIO, National Veterans Affairs Council (hereinafter referred to as NFFE or Union).
- B. This MOU shall govern the procedures for negotiating a Master Agreement between the Department and the Union for all Title 5, hybrid 38 and Title 38 employees included in the consolidated VA-NFFE bargaining units as certified by the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA).
- C. This MOU will remain in full force and effect until such time as negotiations are completed, ratified by union members, passes agency head review, and is signed by the parties.
- D. The parties agree that the terms of this agreement do not establish ground rules for future negotiations. This does not prevent either side from proposing language from this MOU, any previous ground rules, or other source at future ground rules negotiations.

II. Procedures

- A. Pursuant to Article 48 Duration of the current Master Agreement between the parties, that agreement shall remain in effect until a new successor master Agreement becomes effective.
- B. Either party may reopen for negotiations any article or articles from the Master Agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Federation of Federal Employees dated July 1, 2012 (Master) Agreement. Either party may propose new articles not found in the Master Agreement or propose that articles in the 2012 Master Agreement not appear in the new contract. These proposals will be exchanged in Microsoft Word. When exchanging a proposal, both parties will identify when a proposal is the same as the article in the current Master Agreement. Either party may submit up to two additional articles no later than 30 days after the first face to face negotiation session.
- C. The parties agree that all members of the Master Agreement Negotiating Team have the requisite authority to negotiate on behalf of their respective party.
- D. The parties agree that the participation of any subject matter experts shall be for purpose of providing resource information mutually beneficial to the parties. See Section IV, Other Participants, below.

- E. The parties will use any appropriate bargaining technique or a combination thereof. The parties will alternate presenting proposed articles of their choosing. The Chief Negotiators will inform the other of at least three articles they plan to propose prior to the scheduled bargaining session. Each party will introduce its proposed article before any discussion of the article takes place. The party presenting the article will be responsible for providing an electronic copy to the other team. As each proposal is presented the party offering the proposal will explain it, and at a minimum provide the meaning, intent, interest and objectives (if any) of the proposed language. There will be ample opportunity for questions and answers, additional information, and other discussion. The parties will bargain in good faith to reach agreement.
- F. The effective date of the ground rules is the date they are signed by both Parties
- G. Each party will designate a Chief Negotiator. Chief Negotiators will be responsible for providing leadership and being responsible for the conduct of their members Chief Negotiator is responsible for the following, with respect to that party's team:
- Determining the Master Agreement Negotiating Team members including alternates
  - Designating their Alternate Chief Negotiator and Master Agreement Negotiating Team Alternates.
  - Calling caucuses with specified timeframes.
  - Requesting mediation assistance through Federal Mediation and Conciliation (FMCS).
  - Requesting assistance from the Federal Service Impasses Panel (FSIP).
  - Reaching tentative agreements on contract language.
  - Initialing, dating and signing agreed-upon articles.
- H. The Chief Negotiators are jointly responsible for the following:
- Determining the dates for bargaining session, addressing scheduling or logistics modification to negotiations sessions in accordance with the ground rules scheduling agreement.
  - Signing completely agreed upon articles.
  - Mutually agreeing to the presence and number of an observer(s) and subject matter experts during bargaining.
  - Enlist the assistance of a facilitator in the bargaining process.

- I. Since agreements are only reached when the parties are together, each party will make every effort to limit the number and length of caucuses, and will provide an update if more time is needed. The Bargaining team requesting a caucus will indicate the length of caucus, which normally will not exceed 2 hours, prior to leaving the negotiation room to caucus in the caucus room.
- J. During negotiations the Chief Negotiator for each party will verbally signify tentative agreement on each section. Upon request of the Chief Negotiators, the record keeper will memorialize tentative agreements by highlighting or setting the agreed-upon language in boldface in the working document of each article. Tentative agreements on an article may be revoked by either party at any time before the Chief Negotiators signs the final page of the article. When an entire article is fully negotiated and agreed upon, each Chief Negotiator will initial each page of the article and sign and date the last page of the article. The parties may reconsider or revise any signed article only by mutual consent. No signed article is binding and effective until the entire agreement is executed by the parties consistent with this MOU.
- K. A third party action filed by either party concerning these negotiations will not delay further bargaining while the action is pending, except by mutual agreement.
- L. To preserve the integrity of the bargaining process and to promote open exchange of interests and concerns, the parties agree that the content of discussions during Master Contract negotiations will be confidential. Periodic reports on the progress of negotiations to VA Leadership or NFFE Leadership, including local union representatives, will be appropriate, but the information communicated will be confidential and is embargoed from further distribution. The general publication or distribution of specific contract proposals or counter-proposals language discussed or agreed prior to the execution of the contract is strictly prohibited.
- M. Each bargaining team will consist of a chief negotiator and six bargaining team members for a total of seven bargaining team members. Within 10 calendar days of signing ground rules each Chief Negotiator must serve, in writing, the names and contact information of its respective representatives to the opposing Chief Negotiator.

III. Official Time and Bargaining Preparation

- A. This Section applies to Union representatives on the bargaining team who are employed by the Department.
- B. In accordance with 5 USC 7131(a), the seven Union representatives on the Bargaining Team shall be granted official time to attend and participate in the bargaining sessions. The amount of official time will not exceed 40 hours per bargaining session week.

- C. The Department will pay for travel and per diem for six union bargaining team members to meet for two weeks to write proposals and/or prepare for bargaining. The six members will get 40 hours of official time for these two, one week meetings. The meeting location will be in Atlanta GA and the Department will provide a meeting room for the meeting if needed. The Union will give the Department proposed dates for travel 15 days in advance so travel will be arranged. Additionally, six union bargaining team members will receive one week of 40 hours of official time the union will either work remotely or be responsible for their own travel and per diem.
- D. The Parties will provide a complete set of proposals 60 calendar days from signing of ground rules. The parties will begin face to face negotiations 30 calendar days following the exchange of the proposals.
- E. The seven union bargaining team members will receive 16 hours of official time for the weeks when the parties are not at a scheduled bargaining session. Additionally, in accordance with 5 USC 7131(c), official time will be granted for the seven union bargaining team members to attend proceedings before the FLRA. A total of twenty hours of official time will be given to the seven bargaining team members for purposes of ratification votes upon reaching tentative agreement on all articles.
- F. If one of the seven bargaining team members has an existing allocation of official time, he or she may transfer any portion of the existing allocation of official time to a bargaining unit employee while he or she is attending the negotiations, subject to 5 USC 7106 and 38 USC 7422. A recipient of transferred official time may only use the time to perform the functions for which it was originally allocated. (For example, if a member of the bargaining team has an allocation of official time at a local facility to be the Local President, he or she may transfer the Local President allocation to one other union representative, but only for the purpose of being the Local President). Any transfer of time must be coordinated with the supervisor of the employee receiving the transfer.

#### IV. Other Participants

##### A. Role of Observers

The Chief Negotiators may permit observers to attend Master Agreement Negotiating Committee sessions. Observers will remain silent not participate in the negotiation process, and will otherwise abide by all the ground rules agreed to by the Negotiating teams. Each party is responsible for any travel expenses for its own observer. The Chief Negotiators will make every effort to work with the Observer's supervisor or other management official to encourage attendance.

B. Role of Alternates

Each Chief Negotiator may approve attendance of Alternates at Master Agreement Negotiating sessions. Bargaining Team Member alternates serve during another team member's absence. The alternate will have the full rights, responsibilities and authority of the Master Agreement Negotiating Team member for whom they are substituting. Chief Negotiators will notify each other of alternates prior to the alternate's participation in the negotiation session with time sufficient to arrange release from duties and schedule travel. The Chief Negotiators will make every effort to work with the Alternate's supervisor or other management official to encourage attendance.

C. Role of Neutral

The Department will designate one additional person, the "Neutral," who is not on either bargaining team, to memorialize the parties' proposals and tentative agreements during the bargaining sessions. The Neutral is not considered part of either bargaining team and may not participate as a team member at the bargaining table during negotiations or in caucuses. The Neutral will observe the confidentiality of the bargaining process. During bargaining, the Neutral will project the proposed article onto the screen, make any necessary changes to the article and provide an electronic copy of the article to the other party every time the parties separate. Prior to the first session the Chief Negotiators will have a conference call with the proposed neutral.

D. Role of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

Subject Matter Experts (SME's) must be mutually agreed to in advance by the Chief Negotiators. SME's will have no bargaining role in the negotiation process. SME's may only comment and answer questions on matters within the scope of their expertise. SME's will provide their comment and questions by phone, V-Tel, Lync or other electronic communications. If it is necessary for the SME to attend negotiation sessions their attendance will be mutually agreed to by the Chief Negotiators in advance. The Chief Negotiators will work with the SME's supervisor or other management official to encourage attendance. The Department is responsible for any travel and per diem expenses for requested and approved SME's.

V. Session Schedules

Absent mutual agreement by the Chief Negotiators to the contrary, the following rules regarding bargaining sessions shall be followed:

- A. The parties will meet two weeks per month for the first three months of bargaining. If at the end of three months there is 25% or less of articles remaining (articles either not signed or set aside for impasse), then the parties will only need to meet one week a month. If not, the parties will continue to meet for two weeks a month, and will reevaluate on a month by month basis.

- B. Six months after the first week of bargaining commences, bargaining will terminate and the parties will proceed to mediation. By mutual agreement, the parties can schedule additional bargaining sessions prior to meeting with the FMCS. The FMSC mediator will serve as both a facilitator for unaddressed articles and as the mediator to release the parties to the FSIP, if needed.
- C. The Department will fund travel and per diem expenses for up to 7 VA Employees designated as union team members approved for scheduled negotiation sessions for up to 6 months of bargaining. If the parties proceed to mediation then the Department will pay travel and per diem for up to 3 months of mediation for NFFE team members who are VA employees. Observers will not be permitted. If mediation is unsuccessful, the Department will pay travel and per diem for any attendance at proceedings with the FSIP.
- D. If the parties complete bargaining and contact the FMCS prior to the six month deadline, the Department will fund travel and per diem for 7 of NFFE's VA representatives to attend mediation for the remainder of the six months agreed to in the section above. The bargaining schedule will be mutually agreed upon. The Chief Negotiators will meet to plan a schedule of dates upon signing of the ground rules within 30 days. The hourly bargaining schedule is as follows:
  - Monday - Thursday: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
  - Sunday and Friday: Travel day
- E. Through mutual agreement, the Chief Negotiators may make changes to the session schedules.
- F. Upon mutual agreement of the Chief Negotiators, the parties may work later. The parties agree that the Union negotiators are not entitled to overtime, compensatory time for travel, or compensatory time.
- G. The Department will provide one conference room suitable for negotiations and one conference room suitable for caucuses at a location(s) to be determined by the Department. The rooms will have access to printers, Wi-Fi, telephone with conference capabilities. NFFE may provide and the Department will consider any input regarding the parties' possible bargaining locations.
- H. The dress code for the negotiations will be business casual and appropriate for travel days.
- I. Cellular phones and other mobile devices will be placed on vibrate or silent mode.



VI. Services and Facilities

Issues arising regarding services and/or facilities will be resolved expeditiously by the Chief Negotiators. Team members will assist the Chief Negotiators in this area consistent with their individual knowledge and skills.

VII. Impasse Issues

If the parties are unable to reach agreement with assistance from the FMCS mediator, either party may request the assistance of the Federal Services Impasses Panel (FSIP) in accordance with 5 USC 7119 and implementing regulations.

VIII. Mid-Term Negotiations

Absent the mutual agreement of the Chief Negotiators, midterm negotiations will be conducted in accordance of Article 8 of the current NFFE and VA Master Agreement. If the Chief Negotiators mutually agree the matter may be referred to the Master Negotiating Team.

IX. Supplemental and Official Time Negotiations

All local supplemental negotiations or local official time negotiations shall not be initiated after the effective date of this MOU. Any local official time or local supplemental agreements or past practices as of the effective date of this MOU shall remain in effect.

X. Notes

There will be no recording of the negotiations, neither audio nor video. This does not preclude either party from taking laptop or handwritten notes.

XI. Negotiability Before Agency Head Review/ 7422 Appeal

- A. If the Department believes the proposal is non-negotiable (including 38 USC 7422) it will identify how the proposal is inconsistent with a law or government-wide rule or regulation. The Parties will discuss whether there are any ways to resolve the negotiability issue. If the Union continues to believe its proposal is negotiable, it may request a formal declaration of non-negotiability. If the Department declares any proposal non-negotiable, the Union may follow the procedures for resolving negotiability disputes set forth in 5 USC 7117 (Duty to Bargain in Good Faith; Compelling Need; Duty to Consult).
- B. If any proposal declared non-negotiable is subsequently determined by the FLRA to be negotiable, or if the allegation of non-negotiability is withdrawn by the Department, the proposal will, upon the Union(s)'s request, be negotiated at the next scheduled bargaining session or as soon a bargaining session can be scheduled. Nothing in this section will preclude the right of judicial review by either party. If an issue is determined

by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or designee to be negotiable under Title 38, section 7422, the issue will, upon the Union(s)'s request, be negotiated at the next scheduled bargaining session or as soon a bargaining session can be scheduled.

#### XI. Ratification

- A. Upon completion of the negotiations of Articles, the entire Master Agreement will be referred to the Union's membership for ratification. If the union ratifies these articles, it will so notify the Department, and the chief negotiators will execute the agreement within 5 calendar days of such notice. The Parties will then refer the executed Master Agreement for agency head review.
- B. The Union will have sixty (60) calendar days after signature of the term agreement to ratify the contract. If the Union fails to notify the Department within 60 calendar days that it has not ratified the contract, the contract will be considered ratified.
- C. If the Master Agreement is not ratified, the Union will identify the article or portion of the article for reconsideration as soon as possible but no later than 15 calendar days after failure of ratification. Failure to provide the Department with the articles or portion of the articles of failed ratification in this time frame constitutes ratification. The Department and Union will meet within 10 calendar days of notification to attempt to resolve articles union membership did not ratify.
- D. Agency Head Review: Pursuant to 5 USC 7114(c), the head of the Department shall approve the contract within 30 days from the date the agreement is executed if the agreement is consistent with the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute and any other applicable laws, rules or government-wide regulation.
- E. If the Department head does not approve or disapprove the contract within the 30 day period, the Master Agreement shall take effect and be binding on the Department and the Union to the extent it is consistent with law, rules and government-wide regulation. The Master Agreement will be in effect when it has been executed and approved under this section.
- F. If any provisions are rejected by the Secretary on Agency Head Review, the Parties will as soon as possible to review the provisions to determine if they can resolve the dispute prior to the union filing a negotiability appeal. Only rejected language raised at agency head review may be referred to FLRA for negotiability appeal. The Union retains the right to file a negotiability appeal with the FLRA, or seek relief in federal court, as appropriate.

#### XII. Effective Date

The Master Agreement will be in effect when it has been ratified, approved, and signed.

For the Department

Robyn Stanton  
Robyn Stanton,  
VACO LMR

For the NFFE

Jeffery Shapiro  
Jeffery Shapiro, President  
NFFE-IAM, DVA Council  
Dabe 2/1/2018

United States of America

BEFORE THE FEDERAL SERVICE IMPASSES PANEL

In the Matter of

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS AFFAIRS

And

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL  
EMPLOYEES

Case No. 19 FSIP 024

### **DECISION AND ORDER**

This case, filed by the National Federation of Federal Employees (Union) on February 27, 2019, concerns a dispute between it and the United States Department of Veteran Affairs (Agency or Management) over all or parts of 4 articles in the parties' collective-bargaining agreement (CBA). This dispute was filed pursuant to §7119 of the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (the Statute). On May 1, 2019, the Panel asserted jurisdiction over most issues in dispute and directed that those issues be resolved in the manner described below.

### **BARGAINING AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

The Agency is responsible for fulfilling President Lincoln's promise "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving America's veterans "with dignity and compassion and to be their principal advocate in ensuring that they receive care, support, and recognition" for their service to the United States. The Union represents approximately 8,000 bargaining unit employees located throughout the United States who are in a variety of professional positions. The parties are governed by a CBA that expired in July 2015 but continues to roll over.

The Union provided the Agency with a request to renegotiate the CBA in May 2015. Sometime thereafter, the parties began negotiations over a ground rules agreement and largely agreed to what language would be included within that agreement. Despite the foregoing, and before the parties could execute the ground rules agreement, the Union rescinded its request to bargain in January 2017. Accordingly, the Agency filed an unfair labor practice (ULP) charge against the Union. In order to resolve the charge, the parties executed a settlement agreement (ULP

settlement) with the assistance of the Federal Labor Relations Authority's (FLRA) Office of the General Counsel. The agreement required the parties to execute their ground rules agreement and begin CBA negotiations.

The parties turned to contract negotiations that lasted from April 2018 to October 2018. Additionally, they had 6 weeks of mediation with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services (FMCS) between December 2018 and February 2019. The Mediator released the parties on February 27, 2019, in FMCS Case No. 201911770013. The Union filed its request for Panel assistance on the same day. The Agency subsequently filed its own request for assistance. The latter request was consolidated into the former.

Before the Panel, the Union argued that the Panel should decline jurisdiction over the entirety of this dispute because: (1) the ULP settlement prohibited the Agency from introducing its article on official time (Article XX); and (2) several matters were covered by articles that were unopened and, therefore, agreed to. The Agency disputed each claim. Ultimately, the Panel rejected the Union's arguments and asserted jurisdiction over the full dispute on May 1, 2019. The Panel ordered the parties to provide the Panel with Written Submissions in support of their respective positions; they were also provided with an opportunity to provide rebuttal statements. The parties provided both sets of documents to the Panel.

## **PROPOSALS AND POSITION OF THE PARTIES**

### 1. Article XX – Official Time

#### I. Agency Article and Position

The Agency offers a new article that will address solely the topic of official time. From Management's perspective, Article XX is the result of the implementation of its Veterans Affairs Time and Attendance System (VATAS) system. VATAS came about because the Government Accounting Office (GAO) issued a 2017 report in which it lambasted the Agency's inability to accurately track the use of official time. Thus, the Agency's proposed article provides it with what it believes are tools to effectively track such time through VATAS. Accordingly, among other things, the Agency offers the following official-time related proposals:

- Official time for national and local Union use will be established through proposed banks of hours;
- Employees will be prohibited from devoting more than 50% duty time to official time tasks during a year;
- Requests for official time must be made pursuant to VATAS and coordinated with supervisors;

- Categories permitting the use of official time are established.

Management rejects the Union's jurisdictional arguments discussed below in greater detail. In short, the ULP settlement calls for negotiations. Moreover, the Union itself has raised issues involving official time, so Management may properly offer its own proposals on that topic.

## II. Union Article and Position

In opposition to the Agency's proposal, the Union renews arguments that it presented to the Panel previously. Namely, it contends that bargaining over this matter is foreclosed by the ULP settlement and that the parties already have agreement on language in unopened portions of the CBA that already address official time. Thus, imposition of the Agency's proposal is inappropriate.

The Union does not offer its own proposal, but it does challenge some of the positions taken by the Agency in support of its language. For example, the GAO report examined five Veteran Affairs facilities, but the report did not clarify whether any of those facilities involved bargaining units represented by the Union. Additionally, Management did not provide evidence to demonstrate that current official-time reporting requirements are problematic. Finally, the Union argues that the Agency's claim that Article XX does not reduce official time is inaccurate because existing language permits local negotiations over official time. Article XX, however, does not.

## III. Conclusion

The Panel adopts a modified version of Management's proposal. The Union's primary opposition to the Agency's proposal are arguments that the Panel rejected when it asserted jurisdiction over this dispute on May 1, 2019. By the Union's concession, it has presented no new position. As the Panel previously rejected these contentions, the Panel will reject them once again.

On the merits, only the Agency has provided a proposal for consideration. Given the lack of a Union proposal, it is appropriate to use Management's proposal as a basis for resolving this dispute. Although Management's proposal should serve as the base, there is the issue of the Agency's offered amount of official time. In particular, the Agency offers 6,032 hours to national officers per year in Section 2.A and B. It also offers 624 hours per year to local facilities in Section 3.A. As to the former category, the Agency argues that it is not seeking a reduction of hours from the existing agreement. Rather, Management is merely converting hours from percentage to an actual numerical value in order to make tracking easier. Regarding the latter category, Management proposes this bank in order to establish consistency between national and local official-time usage.

The Panel recently clarified its view on non-guarantees of official time. In *Social Security Administration and AFGE*, 19 FSIP 019 (May 2019) (SSA), the Panel acknowledged that such categories fall under 5 U.S.C. §7131(d), which provides that

such official time will be granted in any amount parties demonstrate to be “reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest.” However, the Panel also noted that it has authority to impose amounts when the parties cannot reach agreement. When imposing such decisions, the Panel clarified that it expects *all* parties to justify their position as “reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest.” That is, parties should have no expectation that the Panel will simply adopt one of their positions in the absence of supporting data.

In light of SSA, the Panel cannot conclude that the Agency has satisfied its burden to demonstrate that the offered hours discussed above satisfy the criteria of §7131(d). The Agency’s arguments in favor of their proffered banks of official time essentially revolve around consistency and the need to track usage of official time. But, the Agency does not offer empirical data establishing that the actual hours offered are necessary in light of the Union’s work load. And, it is not apparent from the record before the Panel how much official time is used by the Union or whether the Union could justify that usage (which is only compounded by the Union’s refusal to offer a counter proposal). In light of this lack of data, the Panel does not believe it is appropriate to accept the Agency’s offers in its Sections 2.A and B or Section 3.A. Accordingly, Sections 2.A and B should be stricken and replaced with the following language: **“National Union representatives may request official time pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §7131(d). Such requests will not be considered automatic grants of official time.”** Further, Section 3.A should be stricken and replaced with the following language: **“Local Union representatives may request official time pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §7131(d). Such requests will not be considered automatic grants of official time.”**

The Union challenges various portions of the Agency’s position on several grounds, including the accuracy of the GAO report and lack of supporting data to justify the Agency’s proposal. The Panel, however, has rejected Management’s position by imposing language that operates independently of the justifications offered by the Agency. Accordingly, the Union’s arguments have no bearing on the disposition of this dispute.

The Panel further believes it is appropriate to strike Section 1.G of Management’s proposal, which states that any “Union Official holding a position listed in 38 USC 7401(1)<sup>1</sup> is not eligible for use of official time under 5 U.S.C. 7131(d) as these are direct patient care positions.” Under 38 U.S.C. §7421, the Secretary for the Department of Veterans of Affairs has the authority to issue regulations for certain Title 38 employees<sup>2</sup> concerning their conditions of employment. However, pursuant to 38

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<sup>1</sup> This statute references “[p]hysicians, dentists, podiatrists, chiropractors, optometrists, registered nurses, physician assistants, and expanded-function dental auxiliaries.” 38 U.S.C. §7401(1).

<sup>2</sup> “Title 38 employees” refers to a group of medical-based employees that work for the Department of Veteran Affairs and, as such, are largely governed by a framework established by Title 38 of the U.S. Code. See 38 U.S.C. §7421(b).

U.S.C. § 7422(b) and (d), this authority is subject to bargaining obligations under Chapter 71 of Title 5, *i.e.*, the Federal Service Labor Management Relations Statute (Statute), *unless* the Secretary concludes a bargaining topic touches upon a matter of “professional conduct or competence.” The phrase “professional conduct or competence” is defined to include “direct patient care.”<sup>3</sup> Stated differently, the Secretary can conclude that a matter is excluded from statutory collective bargaining obligations because it concerns “direct patient care.” Under §7422, only the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit has the authority to review the merits of the Secretary’s decision to exclude a topic from negotiations.<sup>4</sup>

The Agency’s proposed Article XX, Section 1.G arose because the Agency has concluded that, pursuant to 38 U.S.C. §7422, official time usage for certain categories of Title 38 employees concerned direct patient care and is, therefore, exempt from collective bargaining rights and procedures.<sup>5</sup> Management’s proposal, therefore, is an attempt to codify this determination. The Panel does not believe it is necessary to include contract language on this topic as it essentially calls for the Panel to define the parties’ legal rights. As discussed above, other forums are appropriate for challenging the Agency’s decision, and it would be prudent to allow any challenge to unfold elsewhere. Additionally, the Agency has not claimed that this language is necessary in order to give effect to the Agency’s determination. **Accordingly, the language will be stricken.**

## 2. Article 5 – Negotiated Grievance Procedure

### I. Agency Article and Position

Management desires to change several aspects of the parties’ existing negotiated grievance procedure. In particular, they seek alterations to three major topics.

The Agency’s first proposed change concerns topics to be excluded from the scope of the grievance procedure. In particular, Management proposes excluding disputes over removals due to misconduct or poor performance, equal employment opportunity (EEO) matters, matters appealable to the Merit System Protection Board (MSPB), and terminations of temporary appointments. With respect to removals, recently enacted legislation concerning Agency employees – 38 U.S.C. §714 (discussed in greater detail below) – governs removals of those employees and provides a more effective template for removal. And, as to all four of these categories, the Union rarely pursues grievances involving any of these topics. Indeed, it has yet to file a single grievance involving the termination of a temporary employee, and there are no such employees currently within the unit. Management’s proposed exclusions will create a more streamlined approach to grievance resolutions.

<sup>3</sup> 38 U.S.C. §7422(c)(1).

<sup>4</sup> 38 U.S.C. §7422(e).

<sup>5</sup> The Agency formalized this position in a written statement issued on April 26, 2019, after the parties had submitted their dispute to the Panel.



The second topic of proposed alteration involves Union use of time and resources to pursue grievances. Management proposes that the Union will be entitled to *no* official time for purposes of processing a grievance. Additionally, the Union will have no entitlement to the use of Agency resources in the same. And, the Union will receive no reimbursement for expenses or travel involved with pursuing a grievance. Management does not believe that providing the foregoing is in the interest of the taxpayers as they have an expectation that Agency resources will be devoted to Agency business rather than third-party litigation. For similar reasons, the Agency believes that official time to pursue these actions is not “reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest” within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. §7131(d). Indeed, Management believes the Union is seeking “unlimited” official time to pursue these actions.

The final category involves Management opposition to new language that would call for the Agency to pay the travel expenses of Union witnesses in connection with a grievance hearing. Management argues that this language conflicts with language the parties agreed to elsewhere (although Management does not provide a specific citation). Thus, it should be rejected.

## II. Union Article and Position

With respect to the first two categories above, the Union seeks to retain the status quo. The last category, however, is new contract language.

On the topic of exclusions, the Union notes that the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia has held that a proponent seeking exclusion of topics from a grievance procedure bears a heavy burden to demonstrate that exclusion is appropriate.<sup>6</sup> Management has not met this burden for any of its exclusion as it failed to provide empirical data demonstrate a need for any of them. Additionally, the MSPB lacks a quorum and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is experiencing a significant backlog. Neither forum, therefore, is an attractive option. Finally, with respect to 38 U.S.C. §714, the Union acknowledges that this statute is new but notes that many concepts contained within are not. Thus, it should not serve as a barrier to grievances.

As to the use of resources to process grievances, the Union opposes Management’s language in its entirety. Contrary to Management’s claim, it is not seeking unlimited official time. Rather, it is requesting only “reasonable” amounts of official time consistent with 5 U.S.C. §7131(d) and recent Panel decisions.<sup>7</sup> As to the use of Agency resources, the Union is of the position that the parties “agreed” that Article 9 of the CBA would remain in effect, and Section 1 of this article addresses the use of various pieces of Agency equipment for “representational purposes.” It would therefore be inappropriate to accept Management’s proposal. The Union also raises the same argument for Union representation travel and per diem expenses in conjunction

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<sup>6</sup> *AFGE v. FLRA*, 712 F.2d 640, 649 (D.C. Cir. 1983) (*AFGE*).

<sup>7</sup> Initial Union Submission at 6-7 (citing *DHHS and NTEU*, 18 FSIP 077 (April 2019)).

with grievances. Specifically, it claims that Article 9, Section 6 authorizes such expenses for “representational purposes.”

Finally, the Union requests imposition of its witness-travel language. The Union claims it reflects current practice. Moreover, the proposal calls for the parties to explore video and teleconference options to save costs.

### III. Conclusion

The Panel will impose a compromise proposal. For the reasons that follow, it will accept most of Management’s language but remove the Agency’s proposed grievance exclusions.

#### i. Grievance Exclusions

The Panel recently clarified its stance on proposed grievance exclusions. In SSA, the Panel acknowledged that it would be mindful of the holding of *AFGE* when tasked with determining whether exclusion is warranted. More specifically, it acknowledged that *AFGE* requires the Panel to examine whether an exclusion proponent establishes the need for such an exclusion in those “particular” circumstances.<sup>8</sup> Thus, although an exclusion proponent bears the burden of proof, that burden turns on the particular facts of each individual case.

Although Management proposes multiple exclusions, the primary point of contention appears to be the topic of removals of Agency employees. The Agency’s main concern is consistency with the recently enacted 38 U.S.C. §714 (effective June 23, 2017). This statute permits the Agency Secretary to “remove, demote, or suspend” Agency employees for misconduct or poor performance.<sup>9</sup> This section further creates abbreviated deadlines for proposing such actions and granting employees an opportunity to respond.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, it establishes an expedited review process to the MSPB, including the ability to ultimately appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.<sup>11</sup> Finally, as relevant, this statute permits employees to pursue grievances pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement where available. But, such grievances are subject to the requirements of §714.<sup>12</sup> And, in any event, a proposed Agency action must be upheld if supported by “substantial evidence”<sup>13</sup>

The Agency’s concern about §714 is borne out of alleged real-world incidents. It notes that, since this law’s enactment, the Agency has experienced at least five separate grievances in which an arbitrator applied an erroneous burden of proof.<sup>14</sup> Yet,

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<sup>8</sup> SSA, 19 FSIP 019 at p. 9-10.

<sup>9</sup> 38 U.S.C. §714(a).

<sup>10</sup> See 38 U.S.C. §714(c).

<sup>11</sup> See 38 U.S.C. §714(d).

<sup>12</sup> See 38 U.S.C. §714(d)(10).

<sup>13</sup> 38 U.S.C. §714(d)(2)(A).

<sup>14</sup> See Initial Agency Submission at 3-4.

Management does not dispute the Union's argument that none of these circumstances involved bargaining unit employees represented by *this* Union. This distinction is important because exclusion under *AFGE* turns on each case's *particular* circumstances. And, in these particular circumstances, the Agency has offered no evidence that these parties' existing grievance process has created any of the foregoing issues it cited.

The only other arguments offered by the Agency on this topic are the lack of overall grievances and the lack of timeframe differences between grievances and MSPB actions. Yet, these arguments undercut the Agency's position because they do not demonstrate that the Agency faces any sort of continued hardship were the existing language to continue.

The other exclusions meet similar fates. The Agency admits there have been few to no grievances for EEO matters, MSPB-related actions, and termination of temporary appointments.<sup>15</sup> Again, given the *lack* of a problem, it is difficult to establish exclusion is justified. The Agency also alleges that exclusion of these categories will create a "consistent system." But, the Agency does not explain how this will be, particularly where actions could continue to be filed in a number of venues depending upon the underlying causes of action and defenses. **Accordingly, the Panel does not believe there is a basis for accepting Management's proposed exclusions and Management's Proposals 1 and 2 for Article 5 should be withdrawn.**

ii. Agency Resources and Grievances

The parties next dispute turns on the allocation of various Agency resources in the pursuit of Union-filed grievances. Broadly, such resources fall into the categories of official time, Agency facilities, and the recuperation of expenses. Each will be addressed in turn.

The first topic is official time, and Management opposes granting *any* such time for the purposes of pursuing a grievance. The Union, by contrast, wishes to retain existing language that allows the Union to request a "reasonable" amount of time. As this Decision and Order discusses the topic of official time within the context of Article XX, the Panel believes that discussion applies equally within this context. Instead of Management's proposal, the Panel will impose the following language: **"Official time for all matters concerning grievances shall be governed by Article XX, Sections 2.A, 2.B, and 3.A." This language will take the place of Management's Proposal 3.A.**

The next area of analysis concerns Union use of Agency facilities and equipment to pursue grievances and also reimbursement of travel and other expenses for Union representatives and witnesses. As an initial matter, the Union argues this topic is foreclosed because the parties reached agreement on these issues in Article 9 of the

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<sup>15</sup> Agency Rebuttal at 3.

CBA. The Union raised this precise argument in an effort to persuade the Panel to deny jurisdiction, and the Panel rejected it. As these arguments present nothing new, the Panel will once again deny them.

**Turning to the merits, the Panel will impose the entirety of Management's language for Article 5, Proposal 3.B.** In support of its language, Management argued to the Panel that taxpayer-funded resources should not be used to support litigation against a taxpayer-funded agency. The Agency's argument is a sensible one. Agency resources should be utilized primarily to support the Agency's mission. Co-opting the foregoing to buttress a Union-sponsored grievance does not further the goals of the Agency's mission, nor is it clear how advancing such litigation provides a benefit to the taxpayer. The Panel adopts the Agency's language without alteration to resolve this dispute.

The final category involves travel and per diem for Union representatives and Union witnesses. Management's position is that each party should be responsible for their own respective costs, and the Union seeks to recuperate various associated costs. This Panel has consistently taken the position that each party should be responsible for their own litigation costs, including travel and per diem.<sup>16</sup> **Consistent with these decisions, the Panel will adopt Management Proposals 3.C and D. The Panel further rejects Union's proposal on travel and per diem (Proposal 4) and orders it withdrawn.**

### 3. Article 8 – Mid-Term Negotiations

#### I. Agency Article and Position

The Agency's proposal covers three categories. The first category involves travel costs for mid-term negotiations. Management proposes changing two existing contract provisions to establish that each party will be responsible for their own costs at the national level. And, Management wishes to delete a third existing provision that allows local Union officials to receive travel costs for travelling to another local facility to assist with their negotiations if certain conditions are satisfied. The Agency would not be a good steward of taxpayer dollars if it continued to fund Union activities that do not provide tangible benefits to Agency operations. Additionally, providing such funding is inefficient as evidenced by these negotiations. In this regard, the parties executed ground rules in which Management agreed to pay the Union's time for travel and per diem for 9 months of negotiations and mediation for a *full* contract. The parties bargained *only seven articles* as a result of the ULP settlement but the Union exhausted all agreed-upon time costs. The Union needs to have "skin in the game" or it will simply continue to exhaust Agency resources. As to the third provision concerning the ability of local Union officials to travel elsewhere, Management claims that the Union has abused the provision. Specifically, the Union national President cited this provision as justification to travel to a local facility to assist with negotiations over their local

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<sup>16</sup> See, e.g., *DODEA and FEA*, 19 FSIP 001 (Feb. 19, 2019).

supplemental agreement. It would be in the best interest of the taxpayer to remove this language and allow each party to be responsible for their own costs.

The second category, in Agency Proposal 4, addresses primarily the existence of local supplemental agreements (LSAs) and past practices. Namely, the proposal calls for all LSA's and past practices to end upon the enactment of the new contract. But, local memorandum of understandings (MOUs) will continue. There is only one existing LSA, and it was negotiated in 2000, well before any existing master CBA language. It should end so the relevant local facility can come into compliance with modern practices. As to MOUs, the Agency proposes that either party may reopen them within 180 days of the new contract. Some MOUs are decades old. Renegotiation will give an opportunity for parties to bring them into compliance with modern practices as well. Management also wishes to emphasize that national bargaining matters should unfold at the national bargaining level.

Finally, Management is opposed to new Union language that would govern information requests. The Union proposes automatic extensions of bargaining time if information is not turned over to the Union within a certain window of time. The parties have agreed-upon language in Article 8 already stating that requests will be granted only upon "mutual agreement." The Agency does not believe extensions should be automatic because different circumstances warrant different responses.

## II. Union Article and Position

The Union wishes to continue existing CBA language that calls for Management to pay Union-related travel expenses and per diem. This language represents the status quo and Management has provided no data to demonstrate the burden it allegedly places upon Agency operations. The President has proposed an Agency budget of \$20.2 billion for Fiscal Year 2020; there is no conceivable way in which the Union's travel expenses would put any significant dent in this figure. In regards to the Agency's ground-rules argument above, the Union notes that Management also contributed to lengthening these negotiations.

On the topic of local LSA's and MOU's, the Union proposes continuing existing language. To begin with, the Union renews its argument that, as part of the ULP settlement, the parties agreed other articles in the CBA would not be reopened for renegotiations. And, some existing CBA articles enshrine the ongoing existence of local agreements. Thus, it is inappropriate for the Agency to attempt to offer language that modifies or terminates existing local agreements. On the merits, the Management's proposal is broad enough that it would allow them to reopen all MOU's. Such language could lead to instability.

As to its information request language, the Union proposes language that would simply call for a 4-day extension for bargaining if the Agency responds to an information request within 2 days or less of bargaining commencing. Existing language calls for an extension equal to the number of delayed days, e.g., 60 days would be added to bargaining if the Agency's data was 60 days late. The Union's proposal, therefore, would lead to more efficient negotiations.

### III. Conclusion

The Panel will impose Management's proposal. The first issue involves three Management proposals that cover the topic of Union travel costs. Existing language calls for the Agency to pay some or all of the Union's costs, depending upon the circumstances. And, the Union insists these practices should continue because the Agency has not demonstrated a need to alter existing circumstances. Consistent with our earlier discussion on costs sharing, however, it would be appropriate to adopt Management's proposals so that each party will be responsible for their own respective costs. In addition to ensuring taxpayer funds are devoted primarily to effectuating the mission of the Agency, Management's proposals will keep the parties focused on completing negotiations. **Accordingly, the Panel will accept Management's Proposals 1 and 2. Additionally, Management Proposal 3, which removes existing language from the CBA, should be adopted without alteration.**

The next topic concerns the existence of various local agreements, and the Panel believes that the Agency's proposal for this issue should prevail as well. The Union's initial argument is that the parties have already reached agreement on other portions of the CBA, including portions that reference existing local agreements. This argument was considered, and rejected, by the Panel when it asserted jurisdiction over Article 8. As to the merits of the Agency's proposal, Management offers its language in an effort to thaw practices and local agreements that have become frozen in time. By eliminating LSA's (of which there is only one) and permitting either party to reopen long-standing local MOU's, Management contends that its facilities can catch up to modern practices. The Union counters that preserving existing agreements will promote stability and defer bargaining costs. But, aside from definitively eliminating one LSA, the Agency's proposal allows for only the *option* of renegotiating local MOU's. The parties can engage in a cost-benefit analysis that accounts for various factors under Management's proposal, but there is no requirement to scrap such agreement wholesale. It is entirely possible that the status quo will continue for local facilities. **Management's Proposal 4, therefore, provides a better balance of meeting the parties' interests and should be adopted.**

Finally, as to Proposal 5 concerning information requests, the Panel will order the Union to withdraw its proposal. Existing Article 8, Section 2.F states "[d]ata requests from either party shall automatically extend the time limits equal to the number of days it takes to receive such data." Management also alleges – without rebuttal from the Union – that the parties have reached agreement in Article 8 over language stating "[e]xtensions or reductions of any time periods will be by mutual agreement, in writing, prior to the expiration of the relevant time period." What is unclear from the record, however, is whether the latter language is intended to trump the former. Adding to the potential confusion, the Union does not explain how its proposed language would fit into the foregoing framework. To avoid exacerbating any potential uncertainty, the Panel believes it is appropriate to reject the Union's requested language.

#### 4. Article 10 – Partnership/Collaborative Relationships

##### I. Agency Article and Position

The Agency proposes striking existing Article 10, “Partnership/Collaborative Relationships.” To begin with, Management contends this article is inconsistent with Executive Order 13,812, “Revocation of Executive Order Creating Labor-Management Forums” (September 29, 2017) (Forum Order). In the Forum Order, the President instructed Federal agencies to take steps to abolish labor forums, councils, committees, etc. Thus, the Agency is obligated to follow this instruction.

On the merits, the Forum Order requires the demonstration of “tangible benefits” to the taxpayer in order to justify the continuation of forums. Yet, during negotiations, the Union failed to provide any documentation or evidence in support thereof. The Union’s proposal also seeks to impose language from a now revoked Executive Order that established labor forums and partnerships. But, the Agency has ended its Partnership Council, making the Union’s proposal redundant. The Union’s proposal also calls for pre-decisional involvement before negotiations. This process results in an inefficient “two-step process” for negotiations that is not an efficient use of Agency resources.

##### II. Union Article and Position

The Union proposes retaining existing Article 10 in its entirety. The article does not establish the structure or scope of partnerships. Instead, it requires only that the parties jointly decide the foregoing. Contrary to Management’s assertion, the Union *did* provide evidence that these groupings assisted the parties, at least at the local level. And, Management has not provided any evidence that partnership or forums has burdened its operations.

##### III. Conclusion

**The Panel will order the adoption of Management’s proposal.** The Union wishes to continue Article 10 in full. This article encourages pre-decisional involvement and also leaves it to the appropriate level of bargaining to determine the particulars of a collaborative/partnership relationship (presumably including whether such a relationship should even exist). The Union claims that it has already provided evidence to the Agency concerning the effectiveness of the foregoing framework. However, the Union did not provide the Panel with any such evidence. Nor is it clear from a review of the parties’ arguments, particularly the Union’s, how continuation of this article would provide a benefit to the Agency’s operations, the employees, or the interests of the taxpayer. Moreover, striking this language does not appear to inhibit the operations of the Union as it would retain its full bargaining rights in accordance with law. **Thus, on balance, it is appropriate to adopt the Agency’s proposal striking Article 10 from the parties’ CBA.**

**ORDER**

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Federal Service Impasses Panel under 5 U.S.C. §7119, the Panel hereby orders the parties to adopt the provisions as stated above.<sup>17</sup>



Mark A. Carter  
FSIP Chairman

September 4, 2019  
Washington, D.C.

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<sup>17</sup> The relevant Management proposals for Articles 5, 8, and XX are attached to this Decision and Order.



**U.S. District Court  
District of Columbia (Washington, DC)  
CIVIL DOCKET FOR CASE #: 1:18-cv-02656-DLF**

NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING  
COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NUU) v.  
TRUMP et al

Assigned to: Judge Dabney L. Friedrich

Cases: [1:18-cv-02629-DLF](#)

[1:18-cv-02847-DLF](#)

[1:18-cv-02778-DLF](#)

Cause: 05:7101 Labor-Management Relations

Date Filed: 11/16/2018

Jury Demand: None

Nature of Suit: 899 Administrative

Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency  
Decision

Jurisdiction: U.S. Government Defendant

**Plaintiff**

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V.

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*in his official capacity as Secretary of  
Veterans Affairs*

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**Defendant**

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS  
AFFAIRS**

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**Michelle D. Jackson**

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Date Filed	#	Docket Text
11/16/2018	<a href="#">1</a>	COMPLAINT against DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE ( Filing fee \$ 400 receipt number 0090-5796858) filed by National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United (NNOC/NNU). (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Civil Cover Sheet, # <a href="#">2</a> Summons)(Bardes, Diana) (Attachment 1 replaced on 11/19/2018) (zef, ). (Entered: 11/16/2018)
11/16/2018	<a href="#">2</a>	MOTION for Leave to Appear Pro Hac Vice :Attorney Name- Micah L. Berul, :Firm- National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United, :Address- 155 Grand Avenue, Oakland, CA 94612. Phone No. - (510) 273-2292. Fax No. - (510) 663-4824 Filing fee \$ 100, receipt number 0090-5796911. Fee Status: Fee Paid. by National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United (NNOC/NNU) (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Declaration of Micah L. Berul)(Bardes, Diana) (Entered: 11/16/2018)
11/16/2018	<a href="#">3</a>	ERRATA <i>Corrected Complaint</i> by National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United (NNOC/NNU) <a href="#">1</a> Complaint, filed by National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United (NNOC/NNU). (Bardes, Diana) (Entered: 11/16/2018)
11/16/2018		Case Assigned to Judge Ellen S. Huvelle. (zef, ) (Entered: 11/19/2018)
11/19/2018	<a href="#">4</a>	SUMMONS (3) Issued Electronically as to All Defendants. (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Notice and Consent)(zef, ) (Entered: 11/19/2018)
11/20/2018		MINUTE ORDER granting <a href="#">2</a> Motion for Leave to Appear Pro Hac Vice: It is hereby ORDERED that the motion for leave to appear pro hac vice is GRANTED; and it is further ORDERED that Micah Berul is admitted pro hac vice for the purpose of appearing in the above-captioned case. Signed by Judge Ellen S. Huvelle on November 20, 2018. (AG) (Entered: 11/20/2018)
12/05/2018	<a href="#">5</a>	RETURN OF SERVICE/AFFIDAVIT of Summons and Complaint Executed. DONALD J. TRUMP served on 11/27/2018; (Bardes, Diana) Modified on 12/7/2018 to correct party served (jf). (Entered: 12/05/2018)
12/07/2018	<a href="#">6</a>	REQUEST FOR SUMMONS TO ISSUE filed by NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NNU).(Bardes, Diana) (Entered: 12/07/2018)
12/10/2018	<a href="#">7</a>	SUMMONS (2) Issued Electronically as to U.S. Attorney and U.S. Attorney General (jf) (Entered: 12/10/2018)
12/14/2018	<a href="#">8</a>	ORDER re transfer of above-captioned case and two other cases to Judge Friedrich as related to No. 18cv2629. Signed by Judge Ellen S. Huvelle on December 14, 2018. (AG) (Entered: 12/14/2018)
12/14/2018	<a href="#">9</a>	Case directly reassigned to Judge Dabney L. Friedrich as related. Judge Ellen S. Huvelle is no longer assigned to the case. (ztnr) (Entered: 12/17/2018)
12/17/2018	<a href="#">10</a>	RETURN OF SERVICE/AFFIDAVIT of Summons and Complaint Executed as to the District of Columbia Attorney General. Date of Service Upon District of Columbia Attorney General 12/11/2018. Answer due for ALL D.C. DEFENDANTS by 1/1/2019. (Bardes, Diana) (Entered: 12/17/2018)
12/17/2018	<a href="#">11</a>	RETURN OF SERVICE/AFFIDAVIT of Summons and Complaint Executed on United States Attorney General. Date of Service Upon United States Attorney General 12/11/2018. (Bardes, Diana) (Entered: 12/17/2018)
02/07/2019	<a href="#">12</a>	Unopposed MOTION for Extension of Time to <i>Respond</i> by DONALD J. TRUMP, MULTI-VA-20-0470-A-000215

		ROBERT WILKIE (Clark, Denise) (Entered: 02/07/2019)
02/08/2019		MINUTE ORDER granting the defendants' unopposed <a href="#">12</a> Motion for Extension of Time to Respond. Accordingly, the defendants' response to the complaint shall be filed on or before March 1, 2019. Signed by Judge Dabney L. Friedrich on February 8, 2019. (JK) (Entered: 02/08/2019)
02/08/2019		Set/Reset Deadlines: Answer due by 3/1/2019. (JK) (Entered: 02/08/2019)
02/27/2019	<a href="#">13</a>	Unopposed MOTION to Consolidate Cases by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE (Clark, Denise) (Entered: 02/27/2019)
02/27/2019	<a href="#">14</a>	ERRATA re <a href="#">14</a> Unopposed MOTION to Consolidate Cases by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE (Clark, Denise); Modified text on 3/4/2019 (tth). (Entered: 02/27/2019)
02/28/2019	<a href="#">15</a>	Unopposed MOTION for Extension of Time to <i>Respond</i> by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE (Clark, Denise) (Entered: 02/28/2019)
03/01/2019		MINUTE ORDER granting the defendants' unopposed <a href="#">13</a> Motion for Consolidation and <a href="#">15</a> Motion for Extension of Time to Respond. Accordingly, it is ORDERED that related cases National Federation of Federal Employees v. Wilkie, No. 18-cv-2778 (DLF), and American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO v. Wilkie, No. 18-cv-2847 (DLF), shall be consolidated with this case. All filings shall be made only in this case, National Nurse Organizing Committee/ National Nurses United v. Trump, No. 18-cv-2656 (DLF), which shall be the LEAD CASE. To avoid duplicative docketing, the parties shall not elect to spread text when filing on ECF. The defendants' response to the complaint shall be filed on or before March 11, 2019. Signed by Judge Dabney L. Friedrich on March 1, 2019. (JK) (Entered: 03/01/2019)
03/01/2019		Set/Reset Deadlines/Hearings: Response to Complaint due by 3/11/2019. (zcdw) (Entered: 03/03/2019)
03/01/2019		Cases consolidated. Cases 18cv2778 and 18cv2847 have been consolidated with the LEAD CASE 18cv2656 pursuant to Minute Order entered on 3/1/2019. All filings shall be made only in the lead case. To avoid duplicative docketing, the parties shall not elect to spread text when filing on ECF. (tth) (Entered: 03/07/2019)
03/11/2019	<a href="#">16</a>	ANSWER to Complaint <i>filed by NNOC/NNU</i> by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE.(Clark, Denise) (Entered: 03/11/2019)
03/11/2019	<a href="#">17</a>	ANSWER to Complaint <i>filed by AFGE</i> by DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE. (Clark, Denise) (Entered: 03/11/2019)
03/11/2019	<a href="#">18</a>	ANSWER to Complaint <i>filed by NFFE/NAGE</i> by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE.(Clark, Denise) (Entered: 03/11/2019)
04/05/2019	<a href="#">19</a>	MOTION for Briefing Schedule <i>and Status Report</i> by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE (Clark, Denise) (Entered: 04/05/2019)
04/05/2019	<a href="#">20</a>	STATUS REPORT by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE. (Clark, Denise) (Entered: 04/05/2019)
04/05/2019		MINUTE ORDER granting the parties <a href="#">19</a> Partial Consent Motion for Briefing Schedule

		and Status Report. It is further ORDERED that the plaintiffs National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses Uniteds, National Federation of Federal Employees, FD-1, IAMAW, AFL-CIOs, and National Association of Government Employees, Inc.s motions for summary judgment are due on May 3, 2019; the defendants cross motions for summary judgment and oppositions to the plaintiffs motions are due on June 7, 2019; the plaintiffs oppositions to the defendants cross motion for summary judgment and replies in support of their motion for summary judgment are due on June 28, 2019; and the defendants replies are due on July 23, 2019. It is further ORDERED that the defendants are permitted to file a combined cross motion and opposition to the plaintiffs' motions of up to 135 pages and a combined reply of up to 75 pages, and the plaintiffs are permitted to file oppositions and replies of up to 45 pages. Signed Judge Dabney L. Friedrich on April 5, 2019. (lcldf3) (Entered: 04/05/2019)
04/05/2019		Set/Reset Deadlines/Hearings: Summary Judgment motions by National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United, National Federation of Federal Employees, FD-1, IAMAW, AFL-CIOs, and National Association of Government Employees, Inc due by 5/3/2019. Response to Motion for Summary Judgment due by 6/7/2019. Reply to Motion for Summary Judgment due by 6/28/2019. Defendants' Cross Motions due by 6/7/2019. Response to Cross Motions due by 6/28/2019. Reply to Cross Motions due by 7/23/2019. (zcdw) (Entered: 04/07/2019)
04/25/2019	<a href="#">21</a>	MOTION to Clarify <i>Briefing Schedule to Include AFGE</i> by AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Text of Proposed Order)(Galat, Judith) (Entered: 04/25/2019)
04/25/2019		MINUTE ORDER granting the plaintiff's unopposed <a href="#">21</a> Motion to Clarify the Briefing Schedule. It is further ORDERED that AFGE's motion for summary judgment is due on May 3, 2019; the defendants' cross motion for summary judgment and opposition to AFGE's motion is due on June 7, 2019; AFGE's opposition to the defendants' cross motion for summary judgment and reply in support of its motion for summary judgment is due on June 28, 2019; and the defendants' reply is due on July 23, 2019. It is further ORDERED that AFGE is permitted to file oppositions and replies of up to 45 pages. Signed by Judge Dabney L. Friedrich on April 25, 2019. (lcldf3) (Entered: 04/25/2019)
04/25/2019		Set/Reset Deadlines/Hearings: Summary Judgment motions due by 5/3/2019. Response to Motion for Summary Judgment due by 6/7/2019. Reply to Motion for Summary Judgment due by 6/28/2019. Cross Motion due by 6/7/2019. Response to Cross Motion due by 6/28/2019. Reply to Cross Motion due by 7/23/2019. (zcdw) (Entered: 04/28/2019)
05/03/2019	<a href="#">22</a>	MOTION for Summary Judgment by NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Memorandum in Support, # <a href="#">2</a> Text of Proposed Order, # <a href="#">3</a> Statement of Facts)(Summerlin, Suzanne) (Entered: 05/03/2019)
05/03/2019	<a href="#">23</a>	MOTION for Summary Judgment by AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Memorandum in Support Plaintiff AFGE's Memorandum in Support of Motion for Summary Judgment, # <a href="#">2</a> Statement of Facts Plaintiff AFGE's Statement of Material Facts, # <a href="#">3</a> Text of Proposed Order Plaintiff AFGE's Proposed Order, # <a href="#">4</a> Exhibit Index of AFGE Exhibits, # <a href="#">5</a> Exhibit AFGE/VA Collective Bargaining Agreement, # <a href="#">6</a> Exhibit VA November, 2018 Determination, # <a href="#">7</a> Exhibit 7422 Repudiation FAQs, # <a href="#">8</a> Exhibit AFGE National Grievance, # <a href="#">9</a> Exhibit VA Response to AFGE Grievance, # <a href="#">10</a> Exhibit VA Handbook 5023, # <a href="#">11</a> Exhibit VA April, 2019 Determination, # <a href="#">12</a> Exhibit Affidavit of Linda Ward-Smith, # <a href="#">13</a> Exhibit Affidavit of Linda Rademaker, # <a href="#">14</a> Exhibit Affidavit of Patty Nash)(Galat, Judith) (Entered: 05/03/2019)
05/03/2019	<a href="#">24</a>	MOTION for Summary Judgment by NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING

MULTI-VA-20-0470-A-000217

		COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NU) (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Memorandum in Support, # <a href="#">2</a> Statement of Facts, # <a href="#">3</a> Declaration of Jonathan Weitz, # <a href="#">4</a> Declaration of Kristine Dixon, # <a href="#">5</a> Declaration of Rhonda Risner, # <a href="#">6</a> Text of Proposed Order, # <a href="#">7</a> Exhibit 1, # <a href="#">8</a> Exhibit 2, # <a href="#">9</a> Exhibit 3, # <a href="#">10</a> Exhibit 4, # <a href="#">11</a> Exhibit 5, # <a href="#">12</a> Exhibit 6, # <a href="#">13</a> Exhibit 7, # <a href="#">14</a> Exhibit 8, # <a href="#">15</a> Exhibit 9, # <a href="#">16</a> Exhibit 10, # <a href="#">17</a> Exhibit 11, # <a href="#">18</a> Exhibit 12, # <a href="#">19</a> Exhibit 13, # <a href="#">20</a> Exhibit 14)(Bardes, Diana) (Entered: 05/03/2019)
06/07/2019	<a href="#">25</a>	MOTION for Extension of Time to <i>File Certified List of Administrative Record</i> by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE (Clark, Denise) (Entered: 06/07/2019)
06/07/2019	<a href="#">26</a>	NOTICE of <i>Filing Certified List of Administrative Record</i> by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE re <a href="#">25</a> MOTION for Extension of Time to <i>File Certified List of Administrative Record</i> (Clark, Denise) (Entered: 06/07/2019)
06/07/2019	<a href="#">27</a>	Memorandum in opposition to re <a href="#">24</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment , <a href="#">23</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment , <a href="#">22</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment filed by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE. (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Exhibit Table of Contents, # <a href="#">2</a> Exhibit Table of Authorities, # <a href="#">3</a> Exhibit Responses to Plaintiffs' Statements of Facts)(Clark, Denise) (Entered: 06/07/2019)
06/07/2019	<a href="#">28</a>	MOTION for Summary Judgment by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Exhibit Table of Contents, # <a href="#">2</a> Exhibit Table of Authorities, # <a href="#">3</a> Exhibit Responses to Plaintiffs' Statements of Fact) (Clark, Denise) (Entered: 06/07/2019)
06/11/2019	<a href="#">29</a>	RESPONSE re <a href="#">25</a> MOTION for Extension of Time to <i>File Certified List of Administrative Record</i> <i>OPPOSITION</i> filed by NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NU). (Summerlin, Suzanne) (Entered: 06/11/2019)
06/11/2019		MINUTE ORDER directing the defendant to file a reply on or before June 14, 2019, addressing the arguments raised in the plaintiffs' <a href="#">29</a> Motion to Strike Certified List of the Administrative Record and Opposition to the Defendants' Motion for Extension. Signed by Judge Dabney L. Friedrich on June 11, 2019. (lcldlf3) (Entered: 06/11/2019)
06/11/2019		Set/Reset Deadlines: Reply due by 6/14/2019. (zcal) (Entered: 06/11/2019)
06/11/2019	<a href="#">30</a>	MOTION to Strike <a href="#">26</a> Notice (Other) by NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NU). (See Docket Entry <a href="#">29</a> to view document) (tth) (Entered: 06/12/2019)
06/14/2019	<a href="#">31</a>	REPLY to opposition to motion re <a href="#">25</a> MOTION for Extension of Time to File Certified List of Administrative Record by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE , (Clark, Denise); Modified docket entry relationship and text on 6/19/2019 (tth). (Entered: 06/14/2019)
06/28/2019	<a href="#">32</a>	ENTERED IN ERROR.....REPLY to opposition to motion re <a href="#">22</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment , <a href="#">28</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment filed by NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO. (Summerlin, Suzanne) Modified on 7/1/2019 (znmw). (Entered: 06/28/2019)
06/28/2019	<a href="#">33</a>	REPLY to opposition to motion re <a href="#">24</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment <i>and Opposition to</i>

		<i>Defendants' Motion for Summary Judgment</i> filed by NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NNU). (Bardes, Diana) (Entered: 06/28/2019)
06/28/2019	<a href="#">34</a>	REPLY to opposition to motion re <a href="#">22</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment <i>Corrected Version</i> filed by NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO. (Summerlin, Suzanne) Modified link on 7/1/2019 (znmw). (Entered: 06/28/2019)
06/28/2019	<a href="#">35</a>	RESPONSE re <a href="#">28</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment filed by AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO. (Galat, Judith) (Entered: 06/28/2019)
06/28/2019	36	Memorandum in opposition to re <a href="#">28</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment filed by NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NNU). (See Docket Entry <a href="#">33</a> to view document). (znmw) (Entered: 07/01/2019)
06/28/2019	37	Memorandum in opposition to re <a href="#">28</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment filed by NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO. (See Docket Entry <a href="#">34</a> to view document). (znmw) Modified on 7/1/2019 (znmw). (Entered: 07/01/2019)
06/28/2019	38	REPLY to opposition to motion re <a href="#">23</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment filed by AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO. (See Docket Entry <a href="#">35</a> to view document). (znmw) (Entered: 07/01/2019)
07/01/2019		NOTICE OF CORRECTED DOCKET ENTRY: Docket Entry <a href="#">32</a> Reply to opposition to Motion was entered in error and was refiled by counsel as Docket Entry <a href="#">34</a> . (znmw) (Entered: 07/01/2019)
07/23/2019	<a href="#">39</a>	REPLY to opposition to motion re <a href="#">28</a> MOTION for Summary Judgment filed by DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, DONALD J. TRUMP, ROBERT WILKIE. (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Exhibit table of contents, # <a href="#">2</a> Exhibit table of authorities)(Clark, Denise) (Entered: 07/23/2019)
07/25/2019	<a href="#">40</a>	Unopposed MOTION for Leave to File <i>Sur-Reply</i> by AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NNU) (Summerlin, Suzanne) (Entered: 07/25/2019)
07/30/2019		MINUTE ORDER granting the plaintiffs' unopposed <a href="#">40</a> Motion to File Sur-Reply to Defendants' Reply in Support of their Motion for Cross Summary Judgment. Accordingly, it is ORDERED that the plaintiffs' shall file their sur-reply on or before August 9, 2019. Signed by Judge Dabney L. Friedrich on July 30, 2019. (lcdlf3) (Entered: 07/30/2019)
07/30/2019		Set/Reset Deadlines: Sur-reply due by 8/9/2019. (zcal) (Entered: 07/31/2019)
08/09/2019	<a href="#">41</a>	SURREPLY to filed by AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NNU). (Summerlin, Suzanne) (Entered: 08/09/2019)
08/23/2019	<a href="#">42</a>	Consent MOTION for Extension of Time to <i>file appendices</i> by AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION



		OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NNU) (Summerlin, Suzanne) (Entered: 08/23/2019)
08/26/2019		MINUTE ORDER granting the <a href="#">42</a> Joint Consent Motion to extend time for parties to file appendices with the Court. See Local Rule 7(n). Accordingly, it is ORDERED that appendices shall be filed on or before September 6, 2019. So Ordered by Judge Dabney L. Friedrich on August 26, 2019. (lcldf3) (Entered: 08/26/2019)
09/06/2019	<a href="#">43</a>	NOTICE of Appendix Pursuant to Local Rule 7(N) by AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, INC., NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO, NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES UNITED (NNOC/NNU) (Attachments: # <a href="#">1</a> Appendix)(Bardes, Diana) (Entered: 09/06/2019)
11/26/2019	<a href="#">44</a>	NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTION OF COUNSEL by Michelle D. Jackson on behalf of All Defendants Substituting for attorney Denise M. Clark (Jackson, Michelle) (Entered: 11/26/2019)
02/19/2020	<a href="#">45</a>	ORDER denying the government's <a href="#">25</a> Motion for Extension of Time to File a Certified List of the Administrative Record without prejudice; denying the plaintiffs' <a href="#">30</a> Motion to Strike; denying the plaintiffs' <a href="#">22</a> <a href="#">23</a> <a href="#">24</a> Motions for Summary Judgment without prejudice; and denying the government's <a href="#">28</a> Motion for Summary Judgment without prejudice. See text for details. Signed by Judge Dabney L. Friedrich on February 19, 2020. (lcldf3) (Entered: 02/19/2020)

<b>PACER Service Center</b>			
<b>Transaction Receipt</b>			
03/16/2020 12:20:23			
<b>PACER Login:</b>	ssummerlin	<b>Client Code:</b>	
<b>Description:</b>	Docket Report	<b>Search Criteria:</b>	1:18-cv-02656-DLF
<b>Billable Pages:</b>	8	<b>Cost:</b>	0.80

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING  
COMMITTEE/NATIONAL NURSES  
UNITED (NNOC/NNU),

*Plaintiff,*

v.

DONALD J. TRUMP, *et al.*,

*Defendants.*

No. 18-cv-2656 (DLF)

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL  
EMPLOYEES, FD1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO, *et  
al.*,

*Plaintiffs,*

v.

ROBERT WILKIE, *et al.*,

*Defendants.*

No. 18-cv-2778 (DLF)

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF  
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO,

*Plaintiff,*

v.

ROBERT WILKIE, *et al.*,

*Defendants.*

No. 18-cv-2847 (DLF)

**ORDER**

Under Local Civil Rule 7(n), in cases involving judicial review of administrative agency actions, “the agency must file a certified list of the contents of the administrative record with the Court within 30 days following service of the answer to the complaint or simultaneously with the filing of a dispositive motion, whichever occurs first.” *See* LCvR 7(n). The government filed its answer on March 11, 2019. *See* Dkt. 16, 17, 18. Without filing a motion for relief from Local Civil Rule 7(n), the government did not file a certified list of the administrative record until June 7, 2019, well past the 30 days required by the rule. *See* Dkt. 26. The plaintiffs object to the timing and breadth of the administrative record filed by the government. *See* Pls.’ Mot. to Strike Certified List of the Administrative R. at 5, Dkt. 30.

The plaintiffs filed motions for summary judgment on May 3, 2019, before the government had produced the administrative record. *See* Dkts. 22, 23, 24. These motions and subsequent motions filed by the plaintiffs only cite to statements of facts and exhibits included in the plaintiffs’ motions, not to the administrative record.

The Court “needs to resolve disputes about the completeness of the administrative record before addressing the merits of dispositive motions.” *McKoy v. Spencer*, 271 F. Supp. 3d 25, 39 (D.D.C. 2017). The government must therefore file a certified list of the administrative record that includes materials relating to the October and November agency actions challenged in the complaints. If the parties disagree about the contents of the administrative record, they shall file appropriate motions for the Court to resolve before they file dispositive motions. Finally, the Court denies both parties’ motions for summary judgment without prejudice and directs the parties to re-file their motions with appropriate citations to the administrative record.

Accordingly, it is

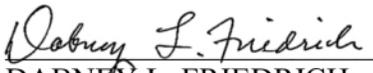
**ORDERED** that the government's Motion for Extension of Time to File Certified List of the Administrative Record, Dkt. 25, is **DENIED** without prejudice and that the government shall file a certified list of the contents of the administrative record on or before February 28, 2020. It is further

**ORDERED** that the plaintiffs' Motion to Strike, Dkt. 30, is **DENIED** as moot. It is further

**ORDERED** that the plaintiffs' Motions for Summary Judgment, Dkts. 22, 23, 24, and the government's Motion for Summary Judgment, Dkt. 28, are **DENIED** without prejudice. Any future motions filed by the parties shall include citations to the administrative record. It is further

**ORDERED** that the parties shall file a proposed briefing schedule for dispositive motions no later than thirty days after the administrative record is filed.

February 18, 2020

  
DABNEY L. FRIEDRICH  
United States District Judge

**From:** Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.  
**Sent:** Fri, 20 Mar 2020 22:57:24 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Subject:** FW: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2020 6:56:25 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Cc:** (b)(6) Kim, Paul D., MD; (b)(6) Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.; Stone, Richard A., MD  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Hi (b)(6)

Please see below, to date I still have not recieved a response to any of the questions below. It would be nice to get an actual response from someone in VHA before we have an RN who gets critically ill. We already have several RNs sick with sytoms awaiting test results and another currently in the hospital.

Secretary Wilkie/Dr. Stone: I know this Administration is Anti Union and wants to ignore the Unions, but this is about the health and safety of the Veterans and RNs who care for them, its time to engage the RNs on the frontlines.

(b)(6)  
**From:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 10:25 AM  
**To:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@gmail.com> (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org> (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov> (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov> (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov> (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** Re: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Hi (b)(6)

I figured since we may have limited time on the briefing on Wednesday, I wanted to provide you questions ahead of time.

If you could please provide responses to each of these questions asap it would be appreciated.

1. What is VA plan for facilities that have insufficient amounts of PPE (N95/PAPR) currently to ensure the safety of RNs, healthcare workers, veterans and the prevention of the spread of COVID 19?
2. What is the VA plan if there is not enough staff to take care of patients due to exposure causing staff to quarantine?
3. Is VA going to be testing RNs and employees for COVID 19? If so, when?
4. What is the plan in each facility to notify the staff when there is either confirmed COVID 19 or suspected case?

5. What is plan/protocol/questions for screening patients, staff, visitors upon entry to the hospital. If they answer yes to any question that they might be symptomatic for COVID 19, what is the protocol then?
6. What is the VA policy on quarantining of employees who have traveled to China, South Korea, Iran or Italy recently?
7. What is the VA policy for those employees who have interacted with other employees who now being quaranted due to interaction with those who have tested positive for COVID 19?
8. Do the medical centers now have full authority to grant weather and safety leave for up to 15 days for anyone needing to be quarantined? If so, please define who you believe is subject to quarantine?

Thanks,

(b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Sent:** Monday, March 9, 2020 8:49 AM

**To:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>

**Cc:** (b)(6)@gmail.com> (b)(6)

(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org> (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@va.gov> (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** RE: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Good mornin (b)(6)

I sincerely apologize. The Dr. who will be giving the brief is deployed on the team to manage COVID-19. I have not received date(s) of his availability for a briefing to date. I followed up with his EA again this morning and will get back to you as soon as I hear something.

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**From:** (b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>

**Sent:** Friday, March 6, 2020 8:47 PM

**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6)@gmail.com> (b)(6)

(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org> (b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

(b)(6)

We are starting to hear about change in protocols related to screenings of staff, patients, and visitors, Telework being used, usage of leave and other issues.

To that end, when will NNOC.NNU be briefed on COVID 19?

(b)(6)

---

**From:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 5, 2020 11:39 AM  
**To:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Cc:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** RE RFI Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Good morning (b)(6)

Just FYSA, I was assigned this RFI today. I will reach out to the responsible program office to obtain the information. Also, just an update, as of 1138 EST 3-5-20, I am still waiting on date/time from the SME regarding the informational briefing on the Corona Virus.

r (b)(6)

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**From:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 3, 2020 11:26 AM  
**To:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@comcast.net>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@navy.mil>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

Hi (b)(6)

I wanted to follow up on the email below as we have recently seen an All Employee Message from Dr. Stone today, but there was no mention of VA facilities being used to house travelers who are being quarantined.

Please provide us an update asap, as well as the information requested below.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

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**From:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 2, 2020 2:28 PM  
**To:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@nationalnursesunited.org>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@comcast.net>; (b)(6) <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Corona Virus quarantined traveler housing?

It is my understanding that the Department of Veterans Affairs is entertaining housing travelers who are currently under quarantine due to exposure to the Corona virus. We are deeply concerned that moving these travelers to VA medical facilities poses a grave danger to nurses, staff, veterans, as well as the general population.

It is our understanding that the medical staff has not been trained on dealing with patients who may be infected with this virus. We are also deeply concerned the VA has not trained staff on the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Additionally, there is a question as to whether the VA has the appropriate PPE. We have sent the below information request to each of the 23 facilities we represent and are awaiting response. Given the concerns raised above I am escalating this request to your office for immediate response.

Information requested:

1. Facilities that are designated as quarantine housing sites for travelers who have entered the U.S. from China. As well as start date, duration .
2. The Facility plan for disaster preparedness and response in the case of mass influx of patients or mass casualty incident;
2. The Facility Infection Control Guidelines, Policies, and other related documents regarding treatment, surveillance, and isolation precautions for patients with known or suspected Novel Coronavirus;
3. The Facility plan for exposure surveillance, prompt notification, and isolation (if indicated) of employees with occupational exposure to Novel Coronavirus;
4. The Facility Infection Control Guidelines, Policies, and other related documents regarding employees working while exhibiting signs and/or symptoms of Novel Coronavirus and/or any potentially communicable disease;
5. Any and all training and education materials, whether written, delivered via electronic means, or provided by in-person instructor(s) regarding Novel Coronavirus, including screening for symptoms and travel history that may indicate the need for further screening and/or isolation, as well as general information about Novel Coronavirus infection and treatment;
6. The number of available airborne isolation (negative pressure) rooms in the Facility;



7. Current stock on hand of N95 respirators and powered air-purifying respirators (PAPRS) as well as gowns, gloves, and other PPE for droplet and aerosol precautions;
8. Please provide a list of areas that could be used to isolate a patient with suspected or possible 2019-nCoV infections if an airborne isolation room is not available;
9. The Facility procedure(s) used to determine daily whether negative pressure is maintained with the airborne isolation room is in use;
10. Has the Facility identified any possible cases of 2019-nCoV? If so, how many?
11. The Facility's plans to adjust staffing to address the additional staff time required to properly care for multiple patients in airborne isolation; and
12. The Facility Attendance Policy and any revisions to the Attendance Policy made in order to address employees with documented exposure or known/suspected Novel Coronavirus.

We understand that this is a developing situation. To the extent that educational materials, supply levels, and policies may be in flux, please consider this information request to be ongoing and provide additional materials as they become available.

Particularized need:

1. Determine if the Hospital is complying with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, as well as all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations;
2. Determine if all RNs are being effectively protected from infectious disease exposure;
3. Determine the most appropriate representational course of action to take in this matter;
4. Fulfill the Union's representation responsibilities;  
The Union will use this information to assess the Facility's preparedness for the current Novel Coronavirus outbreak and its impact upon RNs employed at the Facility.

If any part of this request is denied, or if any material is unavailable, please communicate that fact to me in writing, along with the reason(s) for the denial or unavailability of the requested information, and please provide the remaining items by

the same date. The Union will accept partial fulfillment of this information request without prejudice to its position that we are entitled to all documents and information called for in the request.

The Union reserves the right to request additional information if necessary. To the extent that any of the above information can be provided in electronic format, please do so.

**From:** Powers, Pamela  
**Sent:** Sun, 15 Mar 2020 21:27:52 +0000  
**To:** RLW (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Agency Report VA  
**Attachments:** 3.15.2020 Agency Reporting COVID 19 - Veterans Affairs .docx

Sir, attached are the updated agency response talking points.  
(b)(6) please print for the Secretary in the morning.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

**From:** Powers, Pamela

**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2020 4:12:48 PM

**To:** (b)(6) EOP/OMB <(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6) EOP/OMB <(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov> (b)(6) EOP/OMB

(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>;

(b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6)@omb.eop.gov> (b)(6) EOP/OMB

(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/OVP <(b)(6)@ovp.eop.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6) EOP/OMB <(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris)

(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** Agency Report VA

Attached is the daily report for the Department of Veterans Affairs on the response to COVID-19.

Pam

Pamela Powers

VA Chief of Staff

202-430-(b)(6)

**COVID-19 – Agency Response**  
**3/15/2020**  
**Department of Veterans Affairs**

**\*Please note, new and most pertinent entries highlighted in Blue**

**Administrative Actions, Waivers, and Other Programmatic Changes that Impact Agency Provision of Service or Mission Delivery (Externally Facing)**

- Within a day of the first confirmed US case, VA began planning for COVID-19 by establishing screening and triage, isolation and quarantine, and infection control strategy and plans.
- Activated Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Emergency Management Coordination Cell (EMCC) to Level 1 on January 20, 2020 and it remains activated.
- Screening points established at every major VHA Healthcare Facility (170 hospitals that serve nearly 9 million veterans across the country)
- Limited admissions to Spinal Cord Injury Units (24 major centers supporting 24,000 Veterans)
  - Instituted “No Visitor” stance (except in compassionate cases – ex: actively dying and will be limited to the specific Veteran room only)
- Restricted admission to VA Community Living Centers (CLC) (134 nationwide nursing homes supporting 41,000 Veterans)
  - Instituted a “No Visitor” stance (except in compassionate cases – e.g., actively dying Veteran on our hospice units and will be limited to the specific Veteran room only)
  - No admissions from the community to our CLCs; Veterans will be processed through acute care centers prior to admission
- Established national testing capability for VA facilities at Palo Alto, CA
  - The VA lab in Palo Alto has capacity to test up to 2000 patients.
  - Additionally, VA’s are utilizing state labs and recently added private testing labs available across the country (LabCorp and Quest)
- VA has moved to daily crisis action leadership meetings at 3pm to discuss updates and remain in sync internally and with other federal guidance.
- VA will be changing their policy for healthcare workers who are exposed but asymptomatic. Previously we would quarantine them for 14 days. The impact is VA is losing large chunks of workers for periods of time. VA will go to a new posture of wearing PPE equipment and continue to work during their 14 days. Many civilian hospitals are now doing the same.
- The Board of Veterans Appeals has Veteran Law Judge capacity to increase use of virtual hearings to support the mission of deciding Veterans’ appeals for disability benefits and services. We are exploring this option dependent on availability and prioritization of OIT resources.
- Chief Acquisition Officer sent Guidance Memo to Contractors regarding Health and Safety Precautions for COVID-19
- Contracting Offices will utilize increased simplified acquisition procedures under National Emergency Procedures for any VA Coronavirus support efforts
- Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) Memo to VA’s Heads of Contracting Activities (HCAs) regarding Preparing for Potential Contract Performance Impacts Due to COVID-19
- VA submitted updated COVID-19 Supplemental input to OMB requesting timely, additional funds in support of VA’s 4th mission: to serve both Veterans and non-Veterans in times of national emergency, including significant increases in telemedicine capabilities.

- Established accounting codes for tracking VA's COVID-19 costs in accordance with Congressional reporting requirements of 38 USC Section 1785 paragraph (e).
- Provided HR Emergency Preparedness Guide to employees and managers to answer questions on a wide-range of human capital topics (e.g., leave, telework, employee relations, labor relations, compensation, staffing, reasonable accommodation). Also provided employees with the latest travel guidance from OPM.
- Currently, all VA national cemeteries remains open for visitation and interment as is NCA's National Scheduling Office in St. Louis, Missouri. NCA has developed continuity of operations plans to support possible reductions in staff.

### **Guidance, Communication and Outreach with Stakeholders**

- Secretary Wilkie sent a message regarding general Coronavirus prevention and preparedness strategies to all VA employees March 9.
- VHA Executive in Charge Dr. Richard Stone sent message regarding general Coronavirus prevention and preparedness strategies to all VHA employees March 5.
- Communicating daily with local and national media, updating them on enhanced Coronavirus screening procedures at VA health care facilities.
- VetResources emails, providing Coronavirus information and prevention guidance, were sent to 10.8 million subscribers on February 5 and February 26
- VAntage blog published January 31 and continually updated since: <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/70999/cdc-coronavirus-information-and-resources/>
- MyHealtheVet.com, VA's e-health and online personal record website aimed at Veterans, published a Spotlight blog: "Coronavirus and You: Protect yourself from what is here and now," and "Veterans: Sick? "Stay Home and Phone" a safe convenient option."
- VA has provided over 120 guidance, informational and educational documents to employees and Veterans
- Common banners have been added to all VHA national and local websites informing individuals of changes occurring to support COVID-19 activity
- Active communication with State Veteran Homes to adopt similar COVID-19 preventative measures
- Note to governors regarding VA's Fourth Mission to improve the nation's preparedness and be a "safety net" for response to war, terrorism, national emergencies, and natural disasters to be distributed the week of March 15.
- New York Times and Wall Street Journal stories regarding VA's Fourth Mission to publish the week of March 15.
- VA is working to leverage our text-message SMS capabilities to notify Veterans of the latest guidance, resources, and updates from the VA regarding COVID-19. As a VA-wide effort, we intend to send an initial SMS text message to all Veterans with the link to the VA's COVID-19 resource page. We anticipate **7-8 million veterans** will receive this text.
- Distributed to HCAs and Chief Logistics Officers a standardized statement of objective/performance work statement developed for disinfection of buildings - For use by any VA organization that has the need to disinfect a building due to exposure to COVID-19.
- VA continues to provide updates periodically to Congressional Staff (Committees, Delegations and Leadership) on VA's COVID-19 response posture and the numbers of VA inpatients with COVID-19 and outpatients with COVID-19 who are self-quarantined at home.
- VA provided notice to the House Oversight and Reform Committee, Subcommittee on Government Operations that we will decline their invitation on the Government's response to COVID 19 due to

short notice and that fact that VA's focus needs to be solely on response and protecting the health of our Veterans

### **Other Notable Responses**

- Assessed and prioritizing needs of the supply chain, accelerating delivery of additional N95 masks, face shields and gowns; purchasing a large number of scanning thermometers to facilitate our active screening efforts at all facilities
- Assessed building and land alternative sites of care options, respiratory isolation room adequacy, and breathing machine supply
- Reviewed all cleaning contracts for NCR facilities and confirmed GSA implementation of coronavirus-specific standard cleaning tasks
- Established an emergency employee Resource Center <http://vaww.va.gov/OHRM/Worklife/Pandemic/>
- Deployed 16 Nursing Assistants to assist with screening of AMCITs repatriated (all have been demobilized)
- Deployed 5 Area Emergency Managers to assist Health and Human Services (HHS) Incident Management Teams at each repatriation site
- Deployed a Liaison Officer to the HHS Secretary's Operations Center (SOC) to assist with response coordination
- Conducted analysis of VA Medical facilities contingency data to identify locations for potential COVID-19 dedicated facilities
- VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) established national testing capability for VA employees and clinical providers to connect remotely to the VA network
  - Remote connections are being scaled to meet the crisis requirement.
  - Additionally, we are developing simulated demand testing in our cloud environment – no impact or expectation of the user community for that testing scenario.
- Testing of VA's Virtual Private Network (VPN) Rescue and Citrix Access Gateway connections as well as response time for the Telehealth Applications in preparation of supporting the Department at large during COVID 19.
- Reduced operations and access to VBA Regional Offices and VHA facilities will affect travel board and video hearings scheduled in specific locations. The Board of Veterans Appeals is communicating with VBA and VHA to determine facility status and whether on-site hearings can be supported.
- **Current Veteran Cases**

#### 4 Confirmed Veterans

- 1 in Palo Alto- in VA Inpatient, acute care
- 1 in Southern Nevada – in VA Inpatient, ICU improving
- 1 in Denver – quarantined at home
- 1 in Togus – quarantined at home

#### 21 Presumptive Positive Veterans

- 2 in NOLA- in VA Inpatient, acute care
- 1 in Denver – VA inpatient, acute care
- 1 in Portland- 1 in community hospital
- 5 in Puget Sound- 2 quarantined at home, 2 in VA Inpatient acute care, 1 in VA inpatient ICU
- 2 in Atlanta- 2 quarantined at home
- 1 in Fresno – quarantined at home

2 in Sioux Falls – 2 quarantined at home  
1 in San Francisco – quarantined at home  
2 in Bronx – 2 quarantined at home  
1 in Tucson- VA Inpatient, Acute Care  
1 White River Junction- VA Inpatient- Acute Care  
1 Cleveland- VA Inpatient- Acute Care  
1 Hudson Valley, NY- quarantined at home

#### Veteran Deaths

1 in Portland - 70 year old, male previously reported as presumptive positive

#### Staff

1 Confirmed Employee in Western Consolidated Patient Account Center, Denver  
7 Presumptive Positive Employees- Palo Alto, New York Harbor, New Mexico, 2 in Puget Sound,  
2 in Seattle

- **Cruise Ship Update** – All passengers are now off of the ship
  - Travis: 122 self-identified veterans
  - Miramar: 24 self-identified veterans
  - Lackland: 28 self-identified veterans (no change)
  - Dobbins: 91 self-identified veterans

**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Sun, 1 Mar 2020 15:06:01 +0000  
**To:** Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO; Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO; Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO; Reeves, Randy; Ratchford Jr, Lewis; Tucker, Brooks; Glynn, Melissa S.; Rychalski, Jon J.; Mason, Cheryl; Lapuz, Miguel H.; Wiggins, Leslie B.; Gigliotti, Ralph; Missal, Michael J. (OIG); Davis, Lynda; Stone, Richard A., MD; Christy, Phillip (SES); Jackson, Frederick R.; Powers, Pamela; RLW; Hipolit, Richard (OGC); Sitterly, Daniel; Gfrerer, James; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP) (b)(6); Hutton, James (b)(6) DM; Bader, Christine E. (b)(6); Mayo, Jeffrey; Hudson, William A. (OGC); Mashburn, John K.  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
 (b)(6) (OIG); (b)(6) (CFM); (b)(6)  
 (b)(6)  
**Subject:** SECVA Weekend Summary Report for March 1, 2020



Good Morning,

The current SECVA Weekend-Summary Report is below.

National Terror Advisory System	COGCON	Baseline Force Protection Condition		
		NORTHCOM	EUCOM	PACOM
(b)(7)(E)				

**1. Executive Summary**

- American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) Policy Conference in Washington, DC.
- Monitoring outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19); one death reported in the state of Washington.

**2. Significant Weather** *Source: NWS*

- Rain and thunderstorms possible for the Tennessee, Ohio, and Middle Mississippi Valleys.
- Heavy snow possible for higher elevations of the Sierra Nevada, Wind River, Wasatch, and Central Rocky Mountains.

**3. 2020 AIPAC Policy Conference, Washington, DC, 1-3 Mar**



- Approximately 12,000 attendees will gather to hear keynote speeches by American and Israeli leaders, and stories of US/Israel partnerships, Israeli heroism, and groundbreaking Israeli innovations.
  - This has been designated a Special Event Assessment Rating (SEAR) 3 event. The FBI is the lead agency for intelligence and counterterrorism, and FEMA is the lead Federal agency for emergency and consequence management.
  - Several street closures will be in effect during the event, including L Street between 9th & 10th Streets NW; and L Street between 7th & 9th Streets, NW.
4. **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)** *Source: HHS, CDC, WHO, VHA, VBA*
- As of 0600 ET, 01 Mar, the WHO reports 86,927 confirmed cases globally; 2,976 deaths throughout 59 countries.
  - CDC reports the total confirmed cases in the US is 66, and 1 death: 15 presenting in US; 3 among evacuees from Hubei Province; 44 among evacuees from Diamond Princess; 4 presumptive cases (i.e., positive by CDC test performed in state lab, pending confirmation at CDC).
  - Washington State Department of Health reported the first death in the U.S. due to COVID-19. The Governor of WA has declared a State of Emergency.
  - Department of State has issued travel advisories for the following areas:
    - Daegu, South Korea – Level IV, Do Not Travel, due to widespread community transmission of COVID-19.
    - Lombardy and Veneto, Italy – Level IV, Do Not Travel, due to widespread community transmission of COVID-19.
    - Travel restrictions on any foreign citizen coming to the US who has visited Iran in the last 14 days.
  - **VA Response Efforts**
    - VA provided guidance for all VA TAP Field Staff: Effective 26 Feb, for a period of 30 days, travel is suspended for in-person support to VA TAP events at itinerant sites in the following countries; South Korea, Japan, and Italy.
    - VA Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness (OSP) will stand-up a Crisis Action Team (Lite) to take questions from the field and serve as the future planning cell for non-medical actions on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1500 ET.
    - Further details can be found in the COVID-19 VA SITREP produced daily by the VAIOC.
5. **Long Term Facility Disruptions**
- **Blythe CBOC, CA** *Source: VHA*
    - 17 Jan, the property manager is working to get needed supplies to repair facility; estimated date of completion is the end of March.
    - On 30 Nov, the CBOC sustained extensive water damage from heavy rains.
    - An onsite MVC and telehealth capabilities are being used for care.
  - **Arecibo CBOC, PR** *Source: VHA*
    - Operating from offices on the premises of the Manuel Petaca Iguina Coliseum.
  - **Vieques Rural OPC, PR** *Source: VHA*
    - Operating from a PR Department of Health temporary clinical at Las Maria.
    - Preliminary occupancy date for the long-term lease replacement is June 20.

## 6. Ten Day Outlook

- Nothing significant to report.

Approved by: (b)(6), VAIOC Watch Branch Chief  
Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

V/R,

(b)(6)

VA Integrated Operations Center

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Mobile: (202) 497-(b)(6)

Fax: (202) 273-(b)(6)

**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Sat, 22 Feb 2020 15:17:46 +0000  
**To:** Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO; Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO; Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO; Reeves, Randy; Ratchford Jr, Lewis; Tucker, Brooks; Glynn, Melissa S.; Rychalski, Jon J.; Mason, Cheryl; Lapuz, Miguel H.; Wiggins, Leslie B.; Gigliotti, Ralph; Missal, Michael J. (OIG); Davis, Lynda; Stone, Richard A., MD; Christy, Phillip (SES); Jackson, Frederick R.; Powers, Pamela; RLW; Hipolit, Richard (OGC); Sitterly, Daniel; Gfrerer, James; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP); (b)(6); Hutton, James; (b)(6) DM; Bader, Christine E.; (b)(6) Mayo, Jeffrey; Hudson, William A. (OGC); Mashburn, John K.  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**T:** (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (CFM); (b)(6)  
**Subject:** SECVA Weekend Summary Report for February 22, 2020



Good Morning,

The current SECVA Weekend-Summary Report is below.

Good Morning,

The current SECVA Weekend-Summary Report is below.

National Terror Advisory System	COGCON	Baseline Force Protection Condition		
		NORTHCOM	EUCOM	PACOM
(b)(7)(E)				

1. **Executive Summary**

- Monitoring outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Facility Closures: Bronx Community Living Center (CLC), NYC, NY and the Faleomavaega Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin CBOC, Pago Pago, AS.

2. **Significant Weather** *Source: NWS*

- Southwest thunderstorms; Locally heavy, potential for flash flooding through the weekend.

2. **Mardi Gras, New Orleans, LA (SEAR 2), 22-25 Feb**

- Numerous parades/events are scheduled, with different parade routes through the city.
  - Approximately 300,000 to 400,000 people are expected to attend daily.
  - Mardi Gras Day is 25 Feb.
3. **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)** *Source: HHS, CDC, WHO, VHA*
- As of 22 Feb, the WHO reports 77,794 confirmed cases globally; 2,359 deaths. Total confirmed cases in the U.S. is 35.
  - **VA Response Efforts**
    - VA LNO (AEM) is on-site to coordinate services for Veterans that arrived from the Diamond Princess cruise ship at Lackland AFB.
    - Six Nursing Assistants Supporting repatriation operations at Travis AFB, CA.
    - VA LNO is on-site at the HHS SOC to coordinate VA and HHS response efforts.
    - Further details can be found in the COVID-19 VA SITREP produced daily by the VAIOC.
4. **Short Term Facility Disruptions**
- **Faleomavaega Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin CBOC, Pago Pago, AS** *Source: VHA*
    - On 20 Feb, the facility closed due to a disruption in electrical power, water, telephone service and dangerous driving conditions caused by Tropical Storm Wasi.
    - Wasi is located 125 miles W-NW of Pago Pago, moving SE at 10 mph.
    - High Surf Warnings and Flash Flood Watch are in effect for all islands.
  - **Bronx Community Living Center (CLC), NYC, NY** *Source: VHA*
    - On 20 Feb, the Bronx CLC was closed to new admissions to prevent the spread of an influenza virus.
    - Nine residents tested positive for an influenza virus and were isolated.
    - Currently, no staff have presented any flu-like symptoms.
    - EMS is cleaning the facility and ensuring that hygienic supplies are on hand.
5. **Long Term Facility Disruptions**
- **Blythe CBOC, CA** *Source: VHA*
    - 17 Jan, the property manager is working to get needed supplies to repair facility; estimate project will be completed in less than 30 days.
    - On 30 Nov, the CBOC sustained extensive water damage from heavy rains.
    - An onsite MVC and telehealth capabilities are being used for care.
  - **Arecibo CBOC, PR** *Source: VHA*
    - Operating from offices on the premises of the Manuel Petaca Iguina Coliseum.
  - **Vieques Rural OPC, PR** *Source: VHA*
    - Operating from a PR Department of Health temporary clinical at Las Maria.
    - Preliminary occupancy date for the long-term lease replacement is June 20.
6. **Ten Day Outlook**
- No known significant events affecting the VA in the next ten days.

Approved and Released by (b)(6) Watch Officer

V/R,  
Rene Gomez  
VA Integrated Operations Center  
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Fax: (202) 273-(b)(6)

**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Sat, 7 Mar 2020 15:00:58 +0000  
**To:** Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO;Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO;Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO;Reeves, Randy;Ratchford Jr, Lewis;Tucker, Brooks;Glynn, Melissa S.;Rychalski, Jon J.;Mason, Cheryl;Lapuz, Miguel H.;Wiggins, Leslie B.;Gigliotti, Ralph;Missal, Michael J. (OIG);Davis, Lynda;Stone, Richard A., MD;Christy, Phillip (SES);Jackson, Frederick R.;Powers, Pamela;RLW;Hipolit, Richard (OGC);Sitterly, Daniel;Gfrerer, James;Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP) (b)(6) Hutton, James (b)(6) DM;Bader, Christine E. (b)(6) Mayo, Jeffrey;Hudson, William A. (OGC);Mashburn, John K.  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
 (b)(6) (CFM); (b)(6)  
 T.; (b)(6)  
**Subject:** SECVA Weekend Summary Report for March 7, 2020



Good Morning,

The current SECVA Weekend-Summary Report is below.

National Terror Advisory System	COGCON	Baseline Force Protection Condition		
		NORTHCOM	EUCOM	PACOM
(b)(7)(E)				

1. **Executive Summary**
  - Monitoring Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).
2. **Daylight Saving Time – Spring Forward**
  - Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, 8 Mar 19 at 0200 ET. Hawaii, most of Arizona, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands do not observe daylight saving time.
3. **Significant Weather** *Source: NWS*
  - No significant weather impacts expected.
4. **Tornado Touchdown in Nashville, TN** *Source: A/SOs*
  - On 3 Mar, severe storms spawned seven tornadoes that touched down around Nashville.

- Cookeville VA Clinic network connectivity and telephone service was restored 04 Mar.
  - Readjustment Counseling Services (RCS) deploying a Mobile Vet Center (MVC).
5. **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)** *Source: HHS, CDC, WHO, VHA, VBA*
- As of 0200 ET, 7 Mar, the WHO reports 101,828 confirmed cases globally; 3,483 deaths throughout 92 countries.
  - As of 1700 ET, 6 Mar, the CDC reports the total U.S. cases of COVID-19 is 213 across 19 states and territories; 11 total deaths. State Authorities are reporting 12 deaths.
  - President signed into law \$8.3 billion emergency spending package Mar 6.
  - 69 public health laboratories using CDC tests (45 states and Washington, D.C.).
  - **VA Response Efforts**
    - On 6 Mar, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) updated Guidance to Agencies; only mission-critical travel and training will be authorized. Conferences must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether to cancel or proceed.
    - VA OSP established a Crisis Action Team (Lite) to take questions and serve as the planning cell for non-medical actions on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1500 ET.
    - Further details can be found in the COVID-19 VA SITREP produced daily by the VAIOC.
6. **Long Term Facility Disruptions**
- **Blythe CBOC, CA** *Source: VHA*
    - 17 Jan, the property manager is working to get needed supplies to repair facility; estimated date of completion is the end of March.
    - On 30 Nov, the CBOC sustained extensive water damage from heavy rains.
    - An onsite MVC and telehealth capabilities are being used for care.
  - **Arecibo CBOC, PR** *Source: VHA*
    - Operating from offices on the premises of the Manuel Petaca Iguina Coliseum.
  - **Vieques Rural OPC, PR** *Source: VHA*
    - Operating from a PR Department of Health temporary clinical at Las Maria.
    - Preliminary occupancy date for the long-term lease replacement is June 20.
7. **Ten Day Outlook**
- **2020 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Houston, TX (SEAR 2)**
    - The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo (HSLR) will take place on 14-22 Mar in Houston, TX. This event has received a Special Event Assessment Rating and a Federal Coordinator has been designated. The event will be held at the NRG Arena and is one of the richest regular-season professional rodeo events.
  - **50<sup>th</sup> St. Patrick's Parade, Washington, DC (SEAR 3)**
    - The parade is scheduled for Sunday, March 15th, 2020 at 12 PM – 3 PM. The route is on the National Mall and extends from 7th St to 17th St on Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC; 50,000 participants expected.

Approved by: (b)(6) Duty Officer  
Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

V/R,  
Rene Gomez  
VA Integrated Operations Center  
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**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Sun, 8 Mar 2020 17:01:43 +0000  
**To:** RLW  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela  
**Subject:** Fwd: Meet w/SecVA Today  
**Attachments:** Talking Points 3.8.20.docx

FYI from VHA - will get security tp print.

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**From:** (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 8, 2020 12:58 PM  
**To:** (b)(6) (b)(6) (VHACO)  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela; (b)(6) Stone, Richard A., MD  
**Subject:** RE: Meet w/SecVA Today

Updated talking points for today's WH briefing. I will let you forward to the Sec VA unless you prefer I do that. Thank you

---

**From:** Lieberman, Steven  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 7, 2020 4:05 PM  
**To:** (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6)  
(b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) (VHACO) (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>;  
Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Meet w/SecVA Today

We will get these done earlier starting tomorrow. My apologies.

---

**From:** (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 7, 2020 1:40 PM  
**To:** Lieberman, Steven (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6)  
(b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) (VHACO) (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Cc:** (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) @va.gov>;  
Stone, Richard A., MD <[Richard.Stone2@va.gov](mailto:Richard.Stone2@va.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Meet w/SecVA Today

Dr Lieberman- do you have an update for today's meeting?

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**From:** Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 6, 2020 10:29:20 AM  
**To:** (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6)  
(b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) (VHACO) (b)(6) @va.gov>  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) @va.gov>;

Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** RE: Meet w/SecVA Today

Talking points for Sec VA for 4p meeting today.

---

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 4, 2020 1:00 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; Lieberman, Steven <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Meet w/SecVA Today

Hi (b)(6) – Here are the VHA talking points for SECVA to use at the 4pm meeting today. Dr. Stone will discuss with SECVA at the 2:30pm meeting as well. Thanks!

---

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 4, 2020 7:34 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; VHA USH Meeting Request (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** RE: Meet w/SecVA Today

Great – thank you. See him then.

---

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 4, 2020 7:31 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; VHA USH Meeting Requests <(b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Cc:** Powers, Pamela <(b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Subject:** RE: Meet w/SecVA Today

Hi (b)(6) – 2pm would work best for Dr. Stone. Thanks!

(b)(6)  
**Executive Assistant**  
**Office of the Under Secretary for Health**  
**Veterans Health Administration**  
**O: (202) 461 (b)(6)**  
**Cell: (202) 503 (b)(6)**

---

**From:** (b)(6)@va.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 4, 2020 7:19 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)@va.gov; (b)(6)@va.gov; VHA USH Meeting Request (b)(6)@va.gov

**Cc:** Powers, Pamela <(b)(6)>@va.gov> <(b)(6)>@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Meet w/SecVA Today

I need to get Dr. Stone up here to meet with SecVA regarding a Coronavirus update. We can make any time between 2:00-3:30pm. Does this work for you all? Thank you.

(b)(6)

## FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

### **Veteran Cases**

- 32 Veterans tested for COVID-19
  - 5 positives
    - 1 at Palo Alto HCS
    - 1 at Southern Nevada HCS- still need CDC confirmation, still in critical condition
    - 1 at Seattle quarantined to home- awaiting more details
    - 1 at Denver VAMC (presumptive, awaiting CDC confirmation)
    - 1 at Portland (awaiting more information to determine if presumptive or CDC confirmed).
- 21 tests pending
- 12 Veteran patients under quarantine/self-isolation (as of Mar 6)
- 71 Veterans have been ruled out for COVID-19 (as of Mar 6)

### **Staff**

- 3 employees tested for COVID-19
  - 1 negative
  - 2 still pending, in home isolation
- 41 in home quarantine/self-isolation (as of Mar 6)
- 20 ruled out for COVID-19 (as of Mar 6)

### **Summary of optimizing VHA Capabilities**

#### Interagency Support

As per HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response Task Order received 7 March, VHA is providing a liaison officer to the Incident Management Team at Travis AFB to assist with Cruise Ship repatriation on American citizens. He is there today attending his first tactics meeting.

Screening at all campuses – Telephone triage and active screening being implemented at all VA Medical Centers.

#### Testing – Palo Alto testing lab (as of Mar 6)

- Capability increased to conduct 2000 tests following delivery of more kits
- 5 tests conducted on 3/4 – all negative
- 10 conducted on 3/5 – awaiting results
- Updated for 3/6 and beyond pending
- Many VA's are going to local state labs for their testing needs

Ongoing Communication- continue to have 2 daily calls, one offered to the entire field and the other VISN leadership

- National Center for PTSD published:
  - COVID19 Managing Health Care Workers Stress
  - COVID19 Stress Management for Providers and Community Leaders
  - COVID19 Managing Stress

Latest Princess Cruise Ship- Manifest received March 8, 2020, validating if any are Veterans/Employees

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Sun, 15 Mar 2020 21:29:36 +0000  
**To:** Powers, Pamela;RLW  
**Subject:** Re: Agency Report VA

Yes, Ma'am.

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**From:** Powers, Pamela (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2020 5:27:52 PM  
**To:** RLW (b)(6)@va.gov>; (b)(6)@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Agency Report VA

Sir, attached are the updated agency response talking points.

(b)(6) please print for the Secretary in the morning.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

**From:** Powers, Pamela

**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2020 4:12:48 PM

**To:** (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>

**Cc:** (b)(6) EOP/OMB <(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) OP/OMB <(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>;

(b)(6) OP/OMB <(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/OMB

(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/OVP <(b)(6)@ovp.eop.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6) EOP/OMB <(b)(6)@omb.eop.gov>; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris)

(b)(6)@va.gov>

**Subject:** Agency Report VA

Attached is the daily report for the Department of Veterans Affairs on the response to COVID-19.

Pam

Pamela Powers

VA Chief of Staff

202-430-(b)(6)

**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Mon, 9 Mar 2020 17:57:48 +0000  
**To:** RLW; Powers, Pamela; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris); Mason, Cheryl; (b)(6)  
(b)(6); Hudson, William A. (OGC); Mitrano, Catherine (SES) (OGC); Hipolit, Richard (OGC); Stone, Richard A., MD; Lieberman, Steven; Connell, Lawrence B.; Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO; Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO; Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO; Davis, Lynda; Morton, Barbara C.; Becker, Lee A. (DISABLED ACCT) 2/28/2020; Reeves, Randy; Walters, Ronald; Howard, Tom (NCA); Hutton, James; Wagner, John (Wolf); Tallman, Gary; Brazell, Karen; Christy, Phillip (SES) (b)(6); (b)(6) Rychalski, Jon J.; Murray, Edward; (b)(6) Gfrerer, James; Cussatt, Dominic (SES); Perez, Susan; Sitterly, Daniel; Mayo, Jeffrey; Eskenazi, Laura H.; Ratchford Jr, Lewis (b)(6) DM (b)(6); (b)(6); Jackson, Frederick R.; (b)(6) (OEM); Therit, Tracey; (b)(6)  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
VBAVACO (b)(6); BAVACO; Hogan, Michael R. (OGC) (b)(6); Czarnecki, Tammy (b)(6); (b)(6) /BAVACO (b)(6); Cashour, Curtis; (b)(6) Billups, Angela; (b)(6); (b)(6); Halland, David; (b)(6)  
**Subject:** COVID-19 Crisis Action Team

**Please do Not Forward meeting invite.**



In support of ongoing Federal response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness will conduct daily Crisis Action Team meetings to ensure that the VA has a coordinated and organized response that supports the department's mission essential functions. Senior leaders and key decision makers.

**Principals and plus one are invited to attend the meeting in person. Principal will attend the meeting in the SCIF, and plus ones will attend the meeting in the VAIOC conference room. All others are encouraged to join via Skype.**

The agenda and meeting materials will be provided prior to the meeting.

[Join Skype Meeting](#)

Trouble Joining? [Try Skype Web App](#)

Join by phone

844-376-(b)(6) (East)  
844-815-(b)(6) (East)  
844-770-(b)(6) (East)

English (United States)  
English (United States)  
English (United States)

[Find a local number](#)

Conference ID (b)(6)  
[Forgot your dial-in PIN?](#) | [Help](#)

V/R,

(b)(6)

**VA Integrated Operations Center (VA IOC) Watch Officer**  
Office of Operations, Security & Preparedness  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Av NW, Washington, DC 20420  
**Email:** (b)(6) [\(b\)\(6\)@va.gov">@va.gov](mailto:<span style=) **SIPRNet:** (b)(6) [dhs.sgov.gov](https://dhs.sgov.gov)  
**Tel:** (202) 461-(b)(6) / (202) 219-(b)(6)  
**BB:** (202) 497-(b)(6)  
**Fax:** (202) 273-(b)(6)

**From:** Davis, Lynda  
**Sent:** Thu, 12 Mar 2020 18:47:52 +0000  
**To:** Powers, Pamela;Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris);RLW  
**Subject:** Support for COVID 19 - comms with Veterans  
**Attachments:** Risk Assessment.pptx, VEO\_CoronaVirus\_March2020.docx

---

Sir,

VEO is working very closely with our colleagues at VACO and across the country to support timely and clear communications to veterans and their families using our many channels (web site, hotline, contact centers, surveys, enews letter, social media, tv, blogs, CVEBs, etc).

Below are some immediate additional options that VEO could leverage to provide an even broader reach to Veterans, families, caregivers, survivors, our own employees and community partners.

**Create Veteran enabled self-assessment on VA.gov.**

1. Collaborate with Digital Service and establish a Coronavirus decision tree based on the CDC risk assessment (attached) so Veterans could self-triage based on simple questions and identify the necessary actions they should take.

**Provide clear, consistent answers by phone**

2. Collaborate with VHA to create a standard phone message on VA 311 or other call centers pointing Veterans to coronavirus resources. This is underway already.

**Provide updates by VA TV in facilities and ROs**

3. Have the Veteran News Network (VNN <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yA3X-ZxMTfg>) provide daily Coronavirus updates. The concept is at the top of the hour, VNN will run a video of a VA leader with updated coronavirus information. VNN will inform Veterans about VA resources and allow VA leaders to be proactive without traveling in the field. A ticker can run at the bottom with additional updates and tips. VNN can be embedded on VA.gov/coronavirus.

**Send Veterans critical information via text**

4. Develop a text capability (Similar to VBA's Solid Start program) to advertise the latest VA coronavirus information or point Veterans to coronavirus resources. The reach could be much more effective. For example historically, VetResources has had about 20% open ratio. Text messages are nearly 90% open ratio. This could be an additional messaging capability in addition to VA's other efforts.

Sir, Chief,



If you want to pursue any of these options let me know and I will have my staff begin the necessary coordination immediately.

In addition, attached is a VSignals summary of Veterans comments on the COVID 19 Virus from recent VSignals surveys.

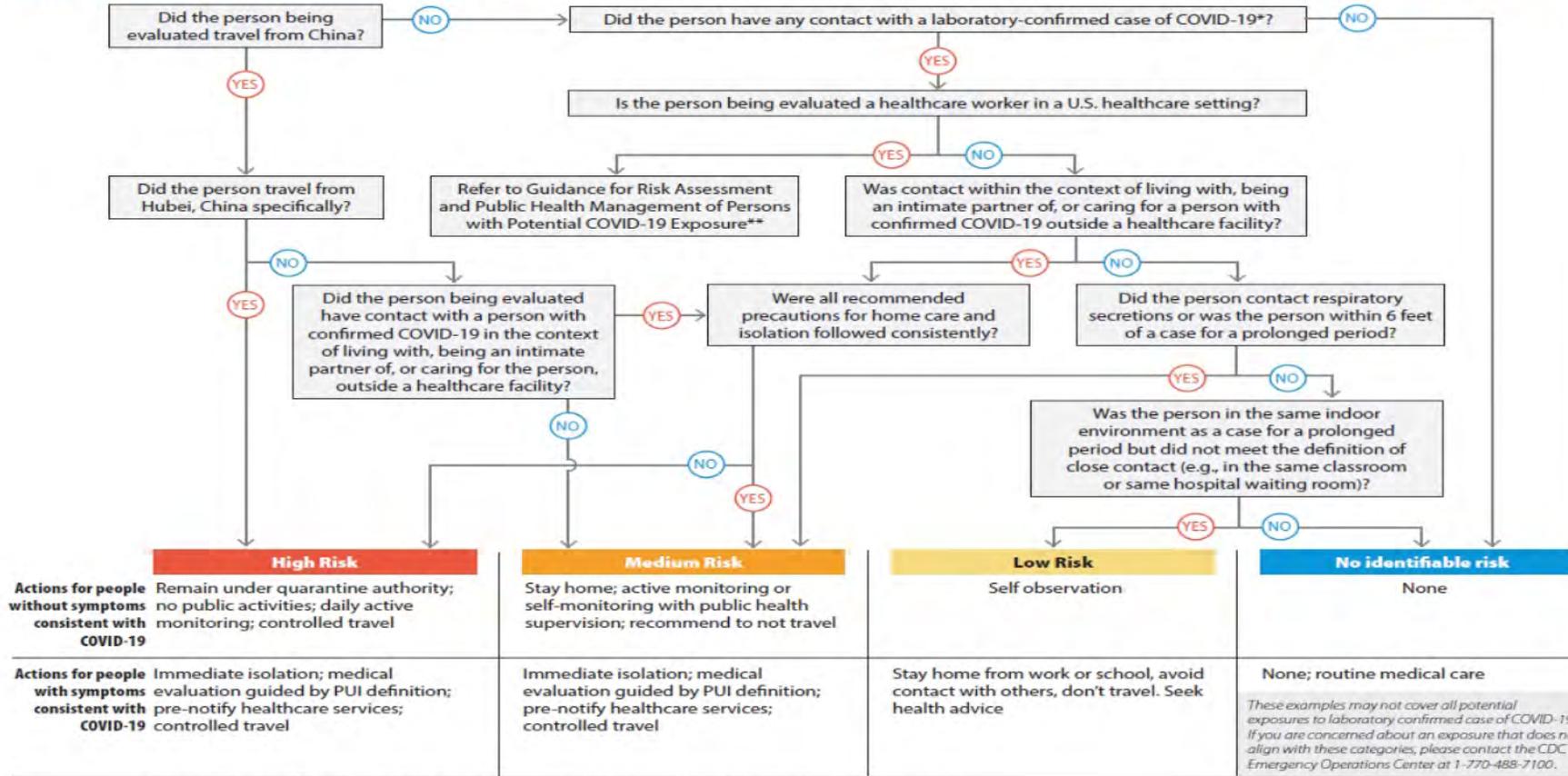
We will provide this regularly to the Chief.

V/r, Lynda



# COVID-19 Risk Assessment

## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Risk Assessment and Public Health Management Decision Making *Each question refers to within the past 14 days*



\*Or a case diagnosed clinically with COVID-19 infection outside of the United States who did not have laboratory testing  
 \*\*Healthcare provider (HCP) guidance outlines risk categories to determine work exclusion and monitoring procedures. After identifying risk category in the HCP guidance, use the categories outlined here to determine quarantine requirements.

02/28/20

*These examples may not cover all potential exposures to laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19. If you are concerned about an exposure that does not align with these categories, please contact the CDC Emergency Operations Center at 1-770-488-7100.*



## VEO VETERANS SIGNALS: COVID-19 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DATA

**Background:** The Veterans Experience Office (VEO) administers surveys to Veterans to capture feedback and identify opportunities for short-term service recovery and long-term program improvement. In some surveys, Veterans also have an opportunity to provide free-text responses.

VEO analyzed feedback from VSignals surveys with a free text response box (Outpatient Surveys and the Board of Veteran Appeals) and VA Social Media to find insights about Veteran feedback related to Coronavirus (COVID-19). The following key words were used in the search; "COVID19," "COVID-19," "coronavirus," "corona," and "virus".

Overall, there were 47 free-text responses in the Outpatient Services Survey and 443 Social Media comments mentioning COVID-19 from December 12, 2019 to March 11, 2020. Below is an overview of this feedback.

**Time Period:** December 12, 2019 to March 11, 2020

### **BLUF:**

#### **When Veterans leave feedback about COVID-19, they leave specific concerns regarding:**

- Inconveniences resulting from new COVID-19 precautions at facilities
- Being exposed to COVID-19 at facilities

#### **When Veterans leave feedback about COVID-19, they leave specific compliments regarding:**

- Professionalism of staff and providers
- Appreciation for COVID-19 precautions taken at VA facilities

#### **When Veterans leave feedback about COVID-19, they leave specific recommendations regarding:**

- Requesting more information about COVID-19
- Telehealth option to prevent spread of COVID-19

#### **When Veterans leave feedback about COVID-19, they leave Social Media comments regarding:**

- Concerns that GI Bill payments will be affected by the COVID-19
- Concerns with verbal screening tests for COVID-19 when entering a facility

## Concerns about COVID-19 from the Outpatient Services Surveys:

"I understand the virus protection but closing all the entries except for 5 is a bit much and the stairwells being locked is a severe inconvenience being able to go into the first floor stairwell but not being able to get out of the 2nd or 3rd floor" [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 56-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/09/2020 at VISN 22, Tibor Rubin VA Medical Center)

"I went to a meeting a group meeting the other day at the Modesto VA in California and we were supposed to be asked if we had any symptoms of the Corona virus and nobody was asked that at the front desk. I think it would be important that they check all the veterans especially when you're going in to a group meeting with about 15 to 20 other vets" [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 53-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/03/2020 at VISN 21, Modesto Clinic)

"We an appt for 1700hrs but shut down the front of the bldg and tell disabled to walk around to the clinic Jesus Christ people I cant walk more than 20 ft without stopping before I pass out. Then when you finally get to the door to get in ur gangtackled about this dated virus thing not why ur there, when you ask for help getting to where you need to go no one wants to help..." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 51-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/07/2020 at VISN 9, Robley Rex Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center)

"Was it wise to mandate but one entrance to the WRJ facility (main entrance/Mountains Bldg,) effective March 10 as a precaution due to the corononavirus outbreak? Strikes me as a questionable decision to congregate so many people in a such a relatively small space, when the advice is to avoid large crowds for fear of contacting the disease." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 91-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/06/2020 at VISN 1, White River Junction VA Medical Center)

"While I realize the precautions we must take for dealing with the Corona virus, It seems to me that handicapped Veterans who have difficulty walking would be better off parking in the new very close parking lot instead of having to park off site due to the number of vehicles around the facility." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 57-year-old male Veteran seen on 02/25/2020 at VISN 9, Robley Rex Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center)

"No protocol for the Coronavirus.." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 55-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/09/2020 at VISN 6, Hunter Holmes McGuire Hospital)

"Given the parking situation (HORRIBLE) and the combined delay for Corona Virus, coming to the campus is an anxiety filled nightmare! I am currently considering cancelling any near future appointments as to relieve myself of that stress!!" [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 40-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/06/2020 at VISN 6, Hampton VA Medical Center)

"I cancelled a few of my appointments so as to limit my exposure to others during this corona virus issue. I am trying to limit where I go (only to grocery store and work). I have a ct scan appointment that I will be keeping but I will limit my visits and exposure to others for the time being." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/09/2020 by a 66-year-old female Veteran seen on 03/03/2020 at VISN 22, Carl T. Hayden Veterans' Administration Medical Center)

"In the coming year I am concerned about re-upping scripts in person for safety of health providers and patients with the coronavirus threat. A simple phone consultation may instead suffice." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/07/2020 by a 63-year-old male Veteran seen on 02/28/2020 at VISN 16, Harrison VA Clinic)

"I had ask for the mask I had brang with me to be put on my face after surgery only to wake and find I had no protective mask on this is right before the China Corona virus I did not like that I had ask before going under to make sure I had a mask on after surgery . This needs to change!!!" [sic] (Feedback submitted 01/24/2020 by a 56-year-old male Veteran seen on 01/21/2020 at VISN 20, Seattle VA Medical Center)

### Compliments about COVID-19 from the Outpatient Services Surveys:

"with the additional coronavirus measures instituted that day, the operation was seamless even though it was my first visit. I had no idea where I was going or how to get there but many people helped, I made all appt's on time, everyone I dealt with was professional, took time to help me, and made it all easy. A big change from my last experience, nicely done" [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 71-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/09/2020 at VISN 19, Grand Junction VA Medical Center)

"They were great and even had people screened for Corona Virus on entry. Audiology was a great group of people." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 56-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/07/2020 at VISN 21, North Las Vegas VA Medical Center)

"I dealt with two individuals at the Pharmacy - I feel bad I didn't write down their names - they were both great - very kind, courteous, polite, and respectful. Plus they had to deal with all the coronavirus precautions - and they handled it so professionally. As they thanked me for my service - I would also like to thank them for their service to all veterans." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 66-year-old female Veteran seen on 03/09/2020 at VISN 19, PFC Floyd K. Lindstrom Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic)

"Im glad to see that the SW Clinic is taking the spread of Corona Virus seriously. At the door a medical professional asked me screening questioned and had disinfect with hand Sanitizer, before entering clinic. Also Dr. Chipchura is great, she goes above and beyond in my patient care." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 40-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/09/2020 at VISN 21, Southwest Las Vegas VA Clinic)

"I experience a kind respectful reception from the virus screeners at the entrance to the specialty client. Thanks" [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 73-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/09/2020 at VISN 21, Ioannis A. Lougaris Veterans' Administration Medical Center)

"I was pleased with the service I receive when I tested positive for the Flu Type A. I was actually placed in the Airborne Illness room and felt like I was quarantined because of the concern that I may have been exposed to someone with Corona Virus. Thankfully I was not, but I appreciated the immediate response and how well I was cared for in the ER. The staff were helpful!" [sic] (Feedback submitted 02/07/2020 by a 29-year-old female Veteran seen on 02/06/2020 at VISN 21, North Las Vegas VA Medical Center)

### Recommendations about COVID-19 from the Outpatient Services Surveys:

"It does not really concern me too much, but in light of the situation with COVID19 I was surprised that both the nurse and doctor shook my hand when I first met them." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 76-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/09/2020 at VISN 8, Malcom Randall Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center)

"would like more information on the new virus attacking us" [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 71-year-old male Veteran seen on 02/27/2020 at VISN 12, Milo C. Huempfner Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic)

"Due to the situation of the virus crown, it is necessary for veterans to communicate with their primary via video conference. That for the protection of all employees and veterans. Because if someone is infected, we are all exposed to being infected." [sic] (Feedback submitted 03/10/2020 by a 65-year-old male Veteran seen on 03/09/2020 at VISN 8, Clermont VA Clinic)

### Comments about COVID-19 from Social Media:

"The @DCVAMC does not seem to be ready if the #coronavirus in #theDistrict gets bigger hits #veterans" (Feedback submitted 3/12/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"soooo what is the plan for veterans using the GI bill and their MHA payments if the colleges decide to close or move online due to the coronavirus? @DeptVetAffairs" Feedback submitted 3/12/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"Ayoooo @DeptVetAffairs don't let this #CoronaVirus effect my disability rate, y'all can rate me from home!" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"👉 to @VeteransHealth 4 investing in #telehealth 'No #telemedicine program can be created overnight, but U.S. health systems that have already implemented telemedical innovations can leverage them for the response to #COVID—19'" @vahsrd <https://t.co/yFa0wz6cbG>" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"Some veterans are quarantined to their home instead of getting in-patient care. However, the @DeptVetAffairs will not comment on how it decides whether a coronavirus patient stays in a VA facility or is sent home. <https://t.co/RN2h9La3z>" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"I have emailed everyone. Tweet and @ them. No one cares. I was recently diagnosed with a degenerative lung disease, from burn pits. And now...during #coronavirus, the @DeptVetAffairs is refusing me lung and mental health care, because I asked to #Choose my own doctor. #Betrayed" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"@DeptVetAffairs making veterans health a priority during #COVID19 does not mean grouping all veterans together through one entrance at VA facilities while were all screed individually so we have close contact with potential carriers....you guys suck at this whole preventing" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"@DeptVetAffairs is the moving of classes to online due to Coronavirus affect the GI Bill payouts to universities?" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"@DeptVetAffairs @StormyVNV VAMC said they were 'testing' for #covid19 but all they did was ask if you were sick." (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"@DeptVetAffairs @StormyVNV All I had to do was say I wasn't feeling sick and waltzed right in! Great anti coronavirus response!" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"@DeptVetAffairs I was my wife and I were both victims of COVID-19 bias by yalls radiology tech to day at the clinic in Fort Worth TX. It was so shameful I refuse to be treated by the tech. Shame to you your employees are suffering from paranoid behavior that retards treatment." (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

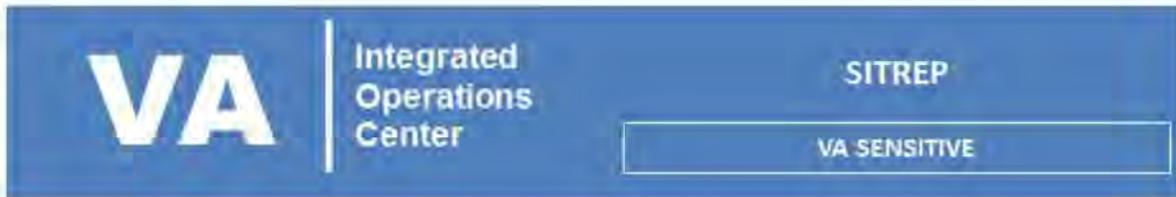
"#COVID19 is a whole different type of #stress. @DeptVetAffairs Ntl. Center for PTSD has some suggestions on how to manage it. <https://t.co/ejyTLKQocM> #resilience #stressmanagement <https://t.co/x0WqZNvYf7>" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"@VAVetBenefits Please ensure the ""distance learning"" school closures due to #coronavirus doesn't stop the #gibillbenefits #Veterans" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"@RepJimmyPanetta @VAPaloAlto #1 Without broad testing, the declared cases of Covid-19 in California is meaningless. Who should have quick, convenient access? Medical personnel, 1st responders, teachers, public works, hospitality, caregivers, people with vulnerable relatives - I guess that makes all of us." (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

"Milwaukee VA implements screenings, other precautions for COVID-19 #WisVetsWomen @milwaukeeva <https://t.co/pmZvzIO7ai>" (Feedback submitted 3/11/20, Department of VA Twitter)

**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Sun, 23 Feb 2020 15:08:51 +0000  
**To:** (b)(6); (b)(6); Wagner, John (Wolf); (b)(6); Tucker, Brooks; Tran, Dat VACO; Tallman, Gary; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris); Stone, Richard A., MD; Smith, Jeffrey M.; Sitterly, Daniel; Rychalski, Jon J.; (b)(6) DCLA); RLW; Reeves, Randy; Ratchford Jr, Lewis; Powers, Pamela; Perez, Susan; (b)(6); Murray, Edward; Morton, Barbara C.; Mitrano, Catherine (SES) (OGC); Missal, Michael J. (OIG); Mason, Cheryl; Lieberman, Steven; Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO; Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO; Lapuz, Miguel H.; Jackson, Frederick R.; Hutton, James; Howard, Tom (NCA); Hogan, Michael R. (OGC); Hipolit, Richard (OGC); Glynn, Melissa S.; Gigliotti, Ralph; Gfrerer, James; Eskenazi, Laura H (b)(6) (HRA/OSP); Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO; Davis, Lynda; Cussatt, Dominic (SES); Connell, Lawrence B.; Christy, Phillip (SES); Case, David (OIG); Brazell, Karen (b)(6) M.; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP); Balland, David; Bader, Christine E.; Mayo, Jeffrey; Hudson, William A. (OGC); Mashburn, John K. (b)(6) VACO)  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** SECVA Weekend Summary Report for February 23, 2020  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg



National Terror Advisory System	COGCON	Baseline Force Protection Condition		
		NORTHCOM	EUCOM	PACOM
(b)(7)(E)				

**1. Executive Summary**

- Monitoring outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Facility Closures: Bronx Community Living Center (CLC), NYC, NY and the Faleomavaega Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin CBOC, Pago Pago, AS.

**2. Significant Weather Source: NWS**

- Heavy rain (excess of 1 inch) in south-central U.S. and mid-Mississippi River Valley.
- Heavy snow expected over northern Cascades.

**2. Mardi Gras, New Orleans, LA (SEAR 2), 22-25 Feb**

- Numerous parades/events are scheduled, with different parade routes through the city.
- Approximately 300,000 to 400,000 people are expected to attend daily.
- Mardi Gras Day is 25 Feb.



3. **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)** *Source: HHS, CDC, WHO, VHA*
  - As of 23 Feb, the WHO reports 78,810 confirmed cases globally; 2,462 deaths. Total confirmed cases in the U.S. is 35.
  - **VA Response Efforts**
    - VA LNO (AEM) is on-site to coordinate services for Veterans that arrived from the Diamond Princess cruise ship at Lackland AFB, TX.
    - Six Nursing Assistants Supporting repatriation operations at Travis AFB, CA.
    - VA LNO is on-site at the HHS SOC to coordinate VA and HHS response efforts.
    - Further details can be found in the COVID-19 VA SITREP produced daily by the VAIOC.
4. **Short Term Facility Disruptions**
  - **Faleomavaega Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin CBOC, Pago Pago, AS** *Source: VHA*
    - On 20 Feb, the facility closed due to a disruption in electrical power, water, telephone service and dangerous driving conditions caused by Tropical Storm Wasi.
    - 23 Feb, facility will remain closed until determination is made if it is safe to reopen once power is restored.
    - Wasi is 130 miles south of AS. On track S-SE and moving away from AS.
    - Flash Flood Watch remains in effect for all islands through midday.
  - **Bronx Community Living Center (CLC), NYC, NY** *Source: VHA*
    - On 20 Feb, the Bronx CLC was closed to new admissions to prevent the spread of an influenza virus.
    - Nine residents tested positive for an influenza virus and were isolated.
    - Currently, no staff have presented any flu-like symptoms.
    - EMS is cleaning the facility and ensuring that hygienic supplies are on hand.
5. **Long Term Facility Disruptions**
  - **Blythe CBOC, CA** *Source: VHA*
    - 17 Jan, the property manager is working to get needed supplies to repair facility; estimate project will be completed in less than 30 days.
    - On 30 Nov, the CBOC sustained extensive water damage from heavy rains.
    - An onsite MVC and telehealth capabilities are being used for care.
  - **Arecibo CBOC, PR** *Source: VHA*
    - Operating from offices on the premises of the Manuel Petaca Iguina Coliseum.
  - **Vieques Rural OPC, PR** *Source: VHA*
    - Operating from a PR Department of Health temporary clinical at Las Maria.
    - Preliminary occupancy date for the long-term lease replacement is June 20.
6. **Ten Day Outlook**
  - No known significant events affecting the VA in the next ten days.

Approved and Released by: (b)(6) and (b)(6) Watch Officers

V/R,

(b)(6)

VA Integrated Operations Center

Email: (b)(6)@va.gov

SIPRNet: (b)(6)@dhs.sgov.gov

Tel: (202) 461-(b)(6) / (202) 219-(b)(6)

Mobile: (202) 497-(b)(6)

Fax: (202) 273-(b)(6)

**VA**

Integrated  
Operations  
Center

SITREP

VA SENSITIVE

VVA

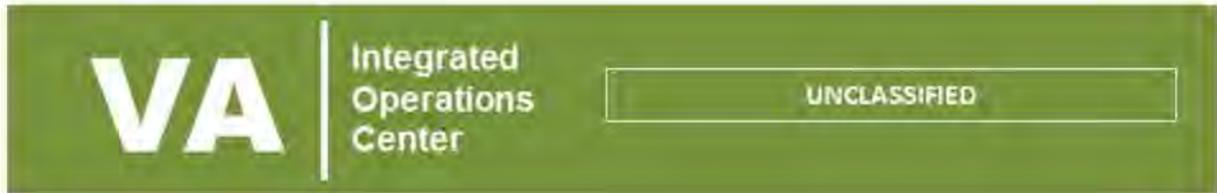
Integrated  
Operations  
Center

SITREP

MULTI-VA-20-0470-A-0000262

AMERICAN  
OVERSIGHT

**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Fri, 28 Feb 2020 22:57:41 +0000  
**To:** (b)(6) Wagner, John (Wolf); (b)(6) Tucker, Brooks; Tran, Dat VACO; Tallman, Gary; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris); Stone, Richard A., MD; (b)(6) M.; Sitterly, Daniel; Rychalski, Jon J; (b)(6) OCLA); RLW; Reeves, Randy; Ratchford Jr, Lewis; Powers, Pamela; Perez, Susan; (b)(6) Murray, Edward; Morton, Barbara C.; Missal, Michael J. (OIG); Mason, Cheryl; Lieberman, Steven; Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO; Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO; Lapuz, Miguel H.; Jackson, Frederick R.; Mitrano, Catherine (SES) (OGC); Hutton, James; Howard, Tom (NCA); Hogan, Michael R. (OGC); Hipolit, Richard (OGC); Glynn, Melissa S.; Gigliotti, Ralph; Gfrerer, James; Eskenazi, Laura H; (b)(6) (b)(6) HRA/OSP; Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO; Davis, Lynda; Cussatt, Dominic (SES); Connell, Lawrence B.; Christy, Phillip (SES); Case, David (OIG); Brazell, Karen; (b)(6) M.; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP); Balland, David; Bader, Christine E.; Mayo, Jeffrey; Hudson, William A. (OGC); Mashburn, John K; (b)(6) (b)(6) (VACO); (b)(6) (b)(6) Eskenazi, Laura H; (b)(6) (OGC); (b)(6) .,; VA Preparedness Program; VAIOC; VAIOC-SITE-B; VAIOC-SITE-C; Watch Officer - BVA; Watch Officer - HR&A; Watch Officer - NCA; Watch Officer - OALC; Watch Officer - OCLA; Watch Officer - OEI; Hogan, Michael R. (OGC); Hudson, William A. (OGC); (b)(6) (OGC); OGC ELT; (b)(6) OGC); Watch Officer - OI&T; Watch Officer - OIG; Watch Officer - OM; Watch Officer - OPIA; Watch Officer - OS; Watch Officer - OS&LE; Watch Officer - VBA; Watch Officer - VHA; OSP IOC Personnel; (b)(6) (b)(6) VBAVACO; (b)(6) VACO); VHA OEM EMCC Command Staff; (b)(6) (ECC); (b)(6) (b)(6) (Portland); (b)(6) (VANJHCS); (b)(6) SAMVAMC; (b)(6) (NCHCS); (b)(6) (b)(6) n (Columbus); (b)(6) (STI); (b)(6) (VHAJAC)  
**Cc:** (b)(6) VA Preparedness Program  
**Subject:** VA Warning Order - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg, WARNO for COVID-19 (Final).pdf



Sir/Ma'am,

Please find the attached VA Warning Order for Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response.

Key take-aways:

- To support the ongoing Federal response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness plans to hold Crisis Action Team

(Lite) meetings at 1500 ET on Tuesdays and Thursdays, in the VAIOC Conference Room (1074A).

- The Crisis Action Team (Lite) will stand-up to take questions from the field and serve as the future planning cell for non-medical actions.
- Senior leaders and key decision makers from select A/SOs will be invited to participate.

v/r

(b)(6)

VA Integrated Operations Center

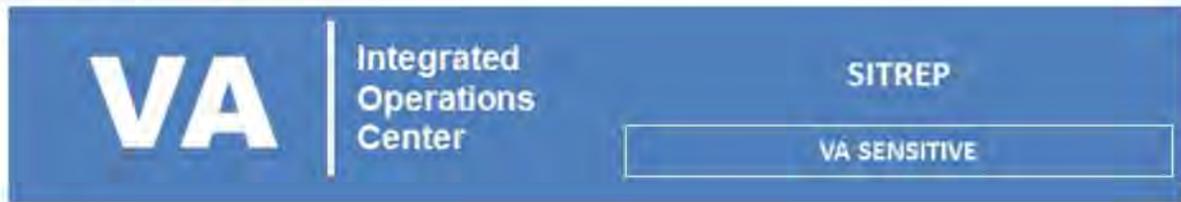
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SITREP

MULTI-VA-20-0470-A-0000265

AMERICAN  
OVERSIGHT

**Warning Order**  
**COVID-19 Response**

**1. Situation.** The Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), which used to be called the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), is a new type of coronavirus. It causes respiratory illness in people. It was first identified in Wuhan, China.

On February 26, CDC confirmed an infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 in a person, within the U.S., who reportedly did not have relevant travel history or exposure to another COVID-19 patient. Confirmed US cases of COVID-19: 61 (+2), including: 15 presenting in U.S, 3 among evacuees from Hubei Province, and 43 among evacuees from Diamond Princess cruise ship. Deaths: 0. Global cases: 82,066 (+1,097) global deaths: 2,800 (+40).

**Declarations:** World Health Organization (WHO) Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) declaration; Presidential "Proclamation on Suspension of Entry as Immigrants and Nonimmigrants of Persons who Pose a Risk of Transmitting 2019 Novel Coronavirus" issued; Department of State (DoS) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have issued Travel Advisories/Health Notices for multiple countries.

**VA Lines of Effort:**

The VA's Operations Center is producing daily COVID 19 Situation Reports.

The Department is conducting/participating in daily internal and inter-agency conference calls.

The Department has an VA LNO deployed to HHS Operations Center to coordinate VA and HHS response efforts.

There are VA healthcare providers, emergency managers and equipment onsite at Travis and Lackland Airforce Bases, to assist with the medical screening mission and to coordinate services for Veterans that were transported from the Diamond Princess cruise ship to Lackland Airforce Base, Tx.

VHA Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and Population Health Services have activated a COVID-19 website <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/index.asp>. As of 26 Feb, the website has been visited 25,059 times with 23,278 unique visits.

**2. Planning Assumptions:** VA will continue to support the “whole of government” approach. As defined in the National Response Framework (NRF), VA supports ESFs 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, and 15.

**3. Mission.** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will support national mission requirements associated with the COVID-19 response as required by NRF. HHS activated Emergency Support Functions 1,6, 8, 13, 14, and 15.

**4. Execution.**

a. **Intent.** The VA will provide support as required to meet essential functions to serve our nation’s Veterans during a national emergency, including the ability to respond to the needs of individuals, as well as federal, state, and local governments, where required by law or binding directive.

b. **Concept of Operations.**

- 1) VA will support the COVID-19 response by employing situational awareness elements and liaisons as required to facilitate the whole of government response.
- 2) The IOC will stand up a Crisis Action Team (Lite) to take question from the Field and serve as the future planning cell for non-medical actions.

c. **Coordinating Instructions.**

- 1) A/SOs with assigned ESF functions listed below are expected to increase their situational awareness, resiliency, and preparedness to respond to potential incidents/emergencies that may require a whole of government response.
- 2) Crisis Action Team members will participate in VA coordination calls. Participation shall be at a decision maker level to ensure timely and efficient response to interagency taskings. These calls will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1500, starting on 3 March 2020.

ESF	A/SO
ESF 3: Public Works and Engineering	OALC
ESF 5: Information and Planning	HRA/OSP
ESF 6: Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services	VBA
ESF 7: Logistics Management and Resource Support	OALC
ESF 8: Public Health and Medical Services	VHA
ESF 13: Public Safety and Security	HRA/OSP/OSLE
ESF 15: External Affairs	OPIA



**5. ADMINISTRATION, RESOURCES, FUNDING**

- a. **Administration:** The Veterans Integrated Operations Center (VAIOC) is responsible for situational awareness, information fusion, information dissemination and operational coordination in support of COVID-19 response.
- b. **Resources.** All Administrations and Staff Offices will provide personnel to support VAIOC operations and the continuations of essential functions.
- c. **Funding.** No additional funding will be provided for this event. All Administrations and Staff Offices are responsible to fund personnel and activities, unless otherwise indicated. If an emergency or major disaster declaration is approved, disaster funds may become available for VA incident support.

**6. Communications and Oversight**

a. **Oversight**

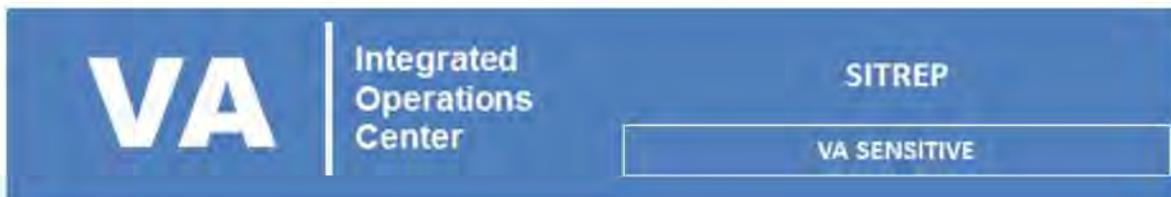
- 1) The Acting Chief Security Officer is the responsible Senior Official.
- 2) Questions regarding this warning order should be referred to the Director, VA Integrated Operations Center at 202-461-(b)(6) or at (b)(6)@va.gov.

Ratchford, Lewis

Digitally signed by Ratchford,  
Lewis  
Date: 2020.02.28 17:45:02 -05'00'

LEWIS RATCHFORD JR  
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Emergency  
Management and Resilience

**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Mon, 9 Mar 2020 14:53:22 +0000  
**To:** (b)(6) Wagner, John (Wolf);Uchalik, Nicholas;Tucker, Brooks;Tran, Dat VACO;Tallman, Gary;Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris);Stone, Richard A., MD (b)(6) M.;Sitterly, Daniel;Rychalski, Jon J. (b)(6) CLA);RLW;Reeves, Randy;Ratchford Jr, Lewis;Powers, Pamela;Perez, Susan;(b)(6) Murray, Edward;Morton, Barbara C.;Mitrano, Catherine (SES) (OGC);Missal, Michael J. (OIG);Mason, Cheryl;Lieberman, Steven;Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO;Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO;Lapuz, Miguel H.;Jackson, Frederick R.;Hutton, James;Howard, Tom (NCA);Hogan, Michael R. (OGC);Hipolit, Richard (OGC);Glynn, Melissa S.;Gigliotti, Ralph;Gfrerer, James;Eskenazi, Laura H. (b)(6) (HRA/OSP);Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO;Davis, Lynda;Cussatt, Dominic (SES);Connell, Lawrence B.;Christy, Phillip (SES);Case, David (OIG (b)(6) M.;Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP);Balland, David;Bader, Christine E.;Mayo, Jeffrey;Hudson, William A. (OGC);Mashburn, John K. (b)(6) (ACO)  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** SITREP (Update 44): Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), Global



SOURCE: CDC / DHS / HHS / WHO / VHA

DATE / TIME: 9 Mar 20 / 1050 ET

LOCATION: Global

NARRATIVE:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely monitoring an outbreak caused by a Novel Coronavirus in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China.
- Helpful links about the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) are listed below:
  - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/index.asp>
  - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/index.asp>

Update 44:

- The WHO is reporting 110,315 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally and 3,841 deaths, throughout 107 countries.
- DHS reports the total U.S. cases of COVID-19 is 564 confirmed cases across 27 states and territories; 22 total deaths: WA (19), FL (2) and CA (1).
- As of 9 Mar, there are six confirmed and two presumptive positive COVID-19 cases in the NCR: four in Montgomery County, MD; one in the City of Fairfax, VA; one in Prince William County, VA, and two presumptive positive cases in the District of Columbia.

- On 7 Mar, the Governor of NY declared a State of Emergency due to COVID-19. KS, MO, and VT announced first presumptive positive cases.
- The U.S. Army has restricted travel to and from Italy and South Korea, the ban will be in effect through 6 May.
- The GRAND PRINCESS cruise ship will dock at Oakland Inner Harbor today at 1200 ET.
  - COVID-19 symptomatic passengers will disembark from a separate gangway from asymptomatic passengers.
  - U.S. passengers will be transported to DOD installations for quarantine (CA residents will be housed at Travis AFB and MCAS Miramar; non-CA residents will be housed at Lackland AFB, TX and Dobbins ARB, GA).
  - Crew members will remain onboard; DOS will facilitate travel for foreign passengers.

#### Update 43:

- On 8 Mar, the WHO is reporting 105,523 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally and 3,584 deaths, throughout 101 countries.
- DHS reports the total U.S. cases of COVID-19 is 436 confirmed cases across 27 states and territories; 19 total deaths.
- The NCR Watch Desk reports there are four confirmed, and one presumptive positive COVID-19 cases in the NCR: three in Montgomery County, MD; one on Ft. Belvoir, Fairfax County, VA; and one presumptive positive case in the District of Columbia.
  - Ft. Belvoir, Fairfax County, VA – 7 March, a US Marine tested positive for COVID-19 and is currently being treated at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital. The Marine recently returned from overseas where he was on official business.
  - District of Columbia – 7 March, a positive presumptive case was announced. A male DC resident in his 50's was admitted to a DC hospital on March 5. He does not appear to have travelled overseas or been in contact with overseas travelers.
  - Montgomery County, MD – 5 March, three cases were confirmed positive. The three patients contracted the virus while traveling overseas. They are in good condition and now in home quarantine. On 28 Feb, one of the patients participated in a gathering at The Village at Rockville. Individuals who attended the gathering may be at some risk for acquiring COVID-19.
- GRAND PRINCESS cruise ship remains underway offshore San Francisco, CA. USCG, HHS, and CA Office of Emergency Services are close to finalizing a location to berth.
- 

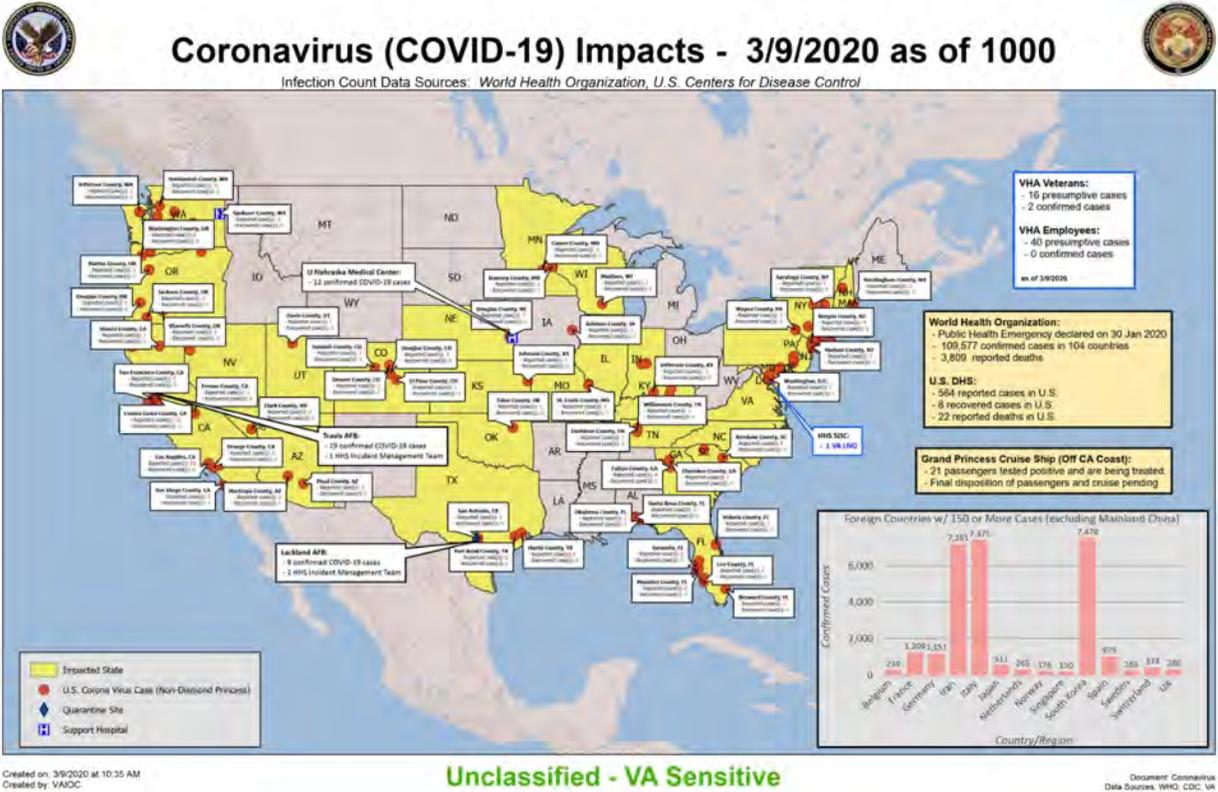
#### VA Response:

- Effective 9 Mar, the Crisis Response Team (CRT) will convene daily at 1500 ET; an invite will be sent to attendees from the VAIOC.
- On 7 Mar, HHS requested a VHA LNO deploy to Travis AFB, CA 8-21 March.
- On 6 Mar, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) updated Guidance to Agencies (attached); only mission-critical travel and training will be

authorized. Conferences must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether to cancel or proceed.

- VA Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness (OSP) stood up a Crisis Action Team (Lite) to take questions from the field and serve as the planning cell for non-medical actions on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1500 ET.
- VA LNO is on-site at the HHS SOC to coordinate VA and HHS response efforts.

NOTE: Map below depicts the cases confirmed in the United States and the airports where enhanced screenings are being conducted.



FOLLOW-UP: VAIOC will continue to monitor and provide updates as they become available.

Approved by: (b)(6) Duty Officer  
 Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

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**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Tue, 10 Mar 2020 14:54:00 +0000  
**To:** (b)(6) Wagner, John (Wolf); (b)(6) Tucker, Brooks; Tran, Dat VACO; Tallman, Gary; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris); Stone, Richard A., MD; Smith, Jeffrey M.; Sitterly, Daniel; Rychalski, Jon J.; (b)(6) OCLA; RLW; Reeves, Randy; Ratchford Jr, Lewis; Powers, Pamela; Perez, Susan; (b)(6) Murray, Edward; Morton, Barbara C.; Mitrano, Catherine (SES) (OGC); Missal, Michael J. (OIG); Mason, Cheryl; Lieberman, Steven; Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO; Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO; Lapuz, Miguel H.; Jackson, Frederick R.; Hutton, James; Howard, Tom (NCA); Hogan, Michael R. (OGC); Hipolit, Richard (OGC); Glynn, Melissa S.; Gigliotti, Ralph; Gfrerer, James; Eskenazi, Laura H.; (b)(6) HRA/OSP; Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO; Davis, Lynda; Cussatt, Dominic (SES); Connell, Lawrence B.; Christy, Phillip (SES); Case, David (OIG); Brazell, Karen; (b)(6) M.; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP); Balland, David; Bader, Christine E.; Mayo, Jeffrey; Hudson, William A. (OGC); Mashburn, John K.; (b)(6) VACO)  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** SITREP (Update 45): Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), Global



SOURCE: CDC / DHS / HHS / WHO / VHA

DATE / TIME: 11 Mar 20 / 1030 ET

LOCATION: Global

NARRATIVE:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely monitoring an outbreak caused by a Novel Coronavirus in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China.
- Helpful links about the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) are listed below:
  - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/index.asp>
  - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/index.asp>

Update 45:

- The WHO is reporting 114,567 confirmed cases globally and 4,027 deaths.
- DHS reports the 755 confirmed U.S. cases and 26 deaths.
- On 9 Mar, GRAND PRINCESS docked in Oakland
  - 3,544 persons on board, 1,970 are U.S. citizens
  - 21 passengers tested positive – 19 crew (remaining on board), 2 passengers.
  - Approx. 1,138 rooms available for quarantine at four DoD installations: Travis Air Force Base (AFB), CA, Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS)

Miramar, CA, Lackland AFB, TX, and Dobbins Air Reserve Base (ARB), GA.

- Currently, 170 evacuees at Travis AFB, none at the other installations.
- The Governors of NJ, OH, RI, and IL made emergency declarations in response to COVID-19.
- The National Capital Region (NCR) Watch Desk reports there are 13 Confirmed/Presumptive Positive cases in the NCR.
- The CDC reported 78 state/local public health labs in 50 states now have the capacity to test up to a cumulative 75,000 people for COVID-19.

#### Update 44:

- The WHO is reporting 110,315 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally and 3,841 deaths, throughout 107 countries.
- DHS reports the total U.S. cases of COVID-19 is 564 confirmed cases across 27 states and territories; 22 total deaths: WA (19), FL (2) and CA (1).
- As of 9 Mar, there are six confirmed and two presumptive positive COVID-19 cases in the NCR: four in Montgomery County, MD; one in the City of Fairfax, VA; one in Prince William County, VA, and two presumptive positive cases in the District of Columbia.
- On 7 Mar, the Governor of NY declared a State of Emergency due to COVID-19. KS, MO, and VT announced first presumptive positive cases.
- The U.S. Army has restricted travel to and from Italy and South Korea, the ban will be in effect through 6 May.
- The GRAND PRINCESS cruise ship will dock at Oakland Inner Harbor today at 1200 ET.
  - COVID-19 symptomatic passengers will disembark from a separate gangway from asymptomatic passengers.
  - U.S. passengers will be transported to DOD installations for quarantine (CA residents will be housed at Travis AFB and MCAS Miramar; non-CA residents will be housed at Lackland AFB, TX and Dobbins ARB, GA).
  - Crew members will remain onboard; DOS will facilitate travel for foreign passengers.

#### VA Response:

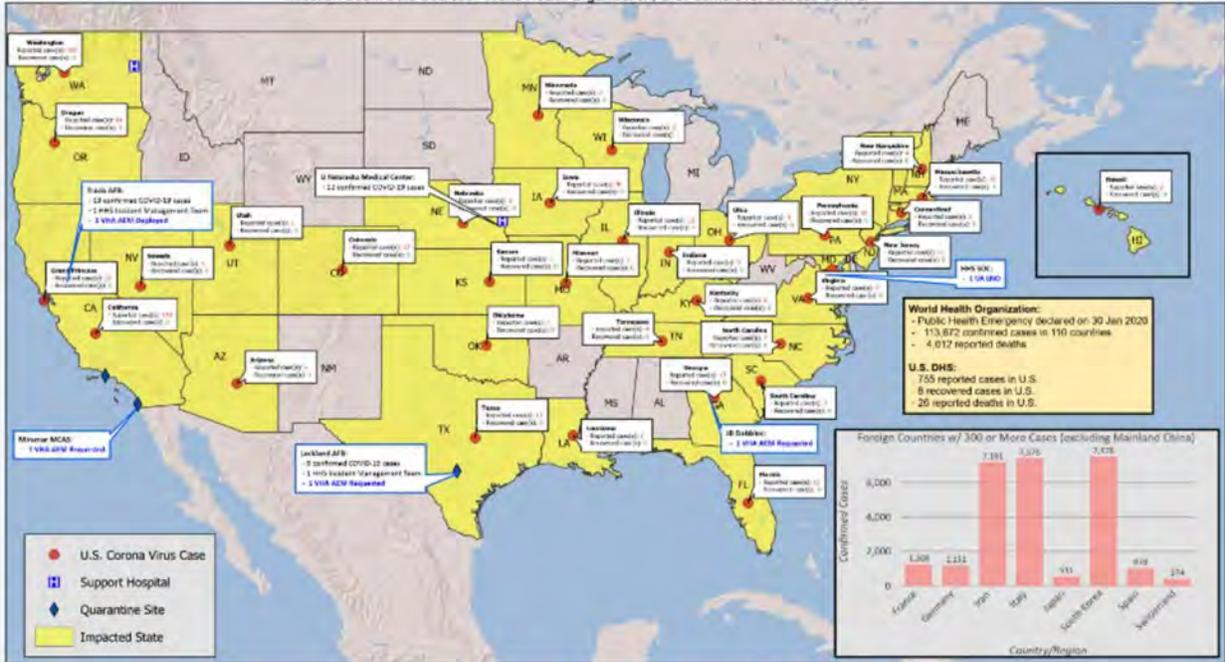
- HHS Incident Management Team support: One AEM deployed to Travis AFB, and one AEM requested for each of the following locations: MCAS Miramar, CA, Lackland AFB, TX, and Dobbins ARB, GA.
- 18 of 18 VISNs have completed COVID-19 Table Top Exercises.
- Effective 9 Mar, the Crisis Response Team (CRT) will convene daily at 1500 ET.

NOTE: Map below depicts the cases confirmed in the United States and the airports where enhanced screenings are being conducted.



# Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts - 3/10/2020 as of 1000

Infection Count Data Sources: World Health Organization, U.S. Centers for Disease Control



Created on: 3/10/2020 at 10:49 AM  
Created by: VAIOC

Unclassified - VA Sensitive

Document Classification Data Source: GPO, CDC, VA

FOLLOW-UP: VAIOC will continue to monitor and provide updates as they become available.

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Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

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**From:** VAIOC  
**Sent:** Wed, 11 Mar 2020 14:13:59 +0000  
**To:** (b)(6); Wagner, John (Wolf) (b)(6); Tucker, Brooks; Tran, Dat VACO; Tallman, Gary; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris); Stone, Richard A., MD; Smith, Jeffrey M.; Sitterly, Daniel; Rychalski, Jon J. (b)(6) (OCLA); RLW; Reeves, Randy; Ratchford Jr, Lewis; Powers, Pamela; Perez, Susan; (b)(6); Murray, Edward; Morton, Barbara C.; Mitrano, Catherine (SES) (OGC); Missal, Michael J. (OIG); Mason, Cheryl; Lieberman, Steven; Lee, Andrea M., VBAVACO; Lawrence, Paul R., VBAVACO; Lapuz, Miguel H.; Jackson, Frederick R.; Hutton, James; Howard, Tom (NCA); Hogan, Michael R. (OGC); Hipolit, Richard (OGC); Glynn, Melissa S.; Gigliotti, Ralph; Gfrerer, James; Eskenazi, Laura H. (b)(6) (HRA/OSP); Devlin, Margarita, VBAVACO; Davis, Lynda; Cussatt, Dominic (SES); Connell, Lawrence B.; Christy, Phillip (SES); Case, David (OIG); Brazell, Karen; (b)(6) M.; Bonzanto, Dr. Tamara (OAWP); Balland, David; Bader, Christine E.; Mayo, Jeffrey; Hudson, William A. (OGC); Mashburn, John K. (b)(6) (VACO)  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** SITREP (Update 46): Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), Global  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg



SOURCE: CDC / DHS / HHS / WHO / VHA

DATE / TIME: 11 Mar 20 / 1013 ET

LOCATION: Global

NARRATIVE:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely monitoring an outbreak caused by a Novel Coronavirus in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China.
- Helpful links about the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) are listed below:
  - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/index.asp>
  - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/index.asp>

Update 46:

- The WHO is reporting 118,162 confirmed cases globally and 4,290 deaths.
- DHS reports the 1,039 confirmed U.S. cases and 30 deaths.
- On 9 Mar, the Grand Princess cruise ship docked in Oakland, CA; 3,544 persons on board, 1,970 are U.S. citizens.
  - 46 passengers tested: 21 tested positive – 19 crew , 2 passengers, 1 inconclusive

- 178 passengers are Veterans; 55 currently enrolled in VA Health Care System. Numbers likely to raise with further passenger screening.
- 25 passengers were sent to CA health care facilities.
- As of 11 Mar 0700 ET, number of planned/actual quarantined U.S. citizens from Grand Princess:
  - Lackland AFB, TX: 383 planned / 98 actual
  - MCAS Miramar, CA: 402 planned / 42 actual
  - Travis AFB, CA: 962 planned / 764 actual
  - Dobbins ARB, GA: 277 planned / 124 actual
  - The process of disembarking and screening passengers is ongoing, expect numbers to increase.
  - HHS is coordinating small flights to transport passengers to their home state, if the home state is willing to take and house their residents from the ship.
- The Governor of NY has taken emergency measures to contain a COVID-19 “cluster” in New Rochelle.
  - The area currently has 108 confirmed cases.
  - The protocols include closing schools, houses of worship and other large gathering facilities within a one-mile radius in New Rochelle for a two-week period, from Thursday, 12 Mar to Wednesday, 25 Mar.
  - The Governor has deployed National Guard troops to a Health Department command post in New Rochelle to assist with the outbreak. The troops are mobilizing to deliver food to homes and help with cleaning public spaces in the containment area.

#### Update 45:

- The WHO is reporting 114,567 confirmed cases globally and 4,027 deaths.
- DHS reports the 755 confirmed U.S. cases and 26 deaths.
- On 9 Mar, GRAND PRINCESS docked in Oakland
  - 3,544 persons on board, 1,970 are U.S. citizens
  - 21 passengers tested positive – 19 crew (remaining on board), 2 passengers.
  - Approx. 1,138 rooms available for quarantine at four DoD installations: Travis Air Force Base (AFB), CA, Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar, CA, Lackland AFB, TX, and Dobbins Air Reserve Base (ARB), GA.
  - Currently, 170 evacuees at Travis AFB, none at the other installations.
  - The Governors of NJ, OH, RI, and IL made emergency declarations in response to COVID-19.
- The National Capital Region (NCR) Watch Desk reports there are 13 Confirmed/Presumptive Positive cases in the NCR.
- The CDC reported 78 state/local public health labs in 50 states now have the capacity to test up to a cumulative 75,000 people for COVID-19.

#### VA Response:

- HHS Incident Management Team support: One AEM deployed to Travis AFB, and two AEMs onsite at MCAS Miramar, CA, and Dobbins ARB, GA. One AEM enroute to Lackland AFB, TX.
- Effective 9 Mar, the Crisis Action Team (CAT) will convene daily at 1500 ET.

NOTE: Map below depicts the cases confirmed in the United States and the airports where enhanced screenings are being conducted.



## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts - 3/11/2020 as of 0900

Infection Count Data Sources: World Health Organization, U.S. Centers for Disease Control



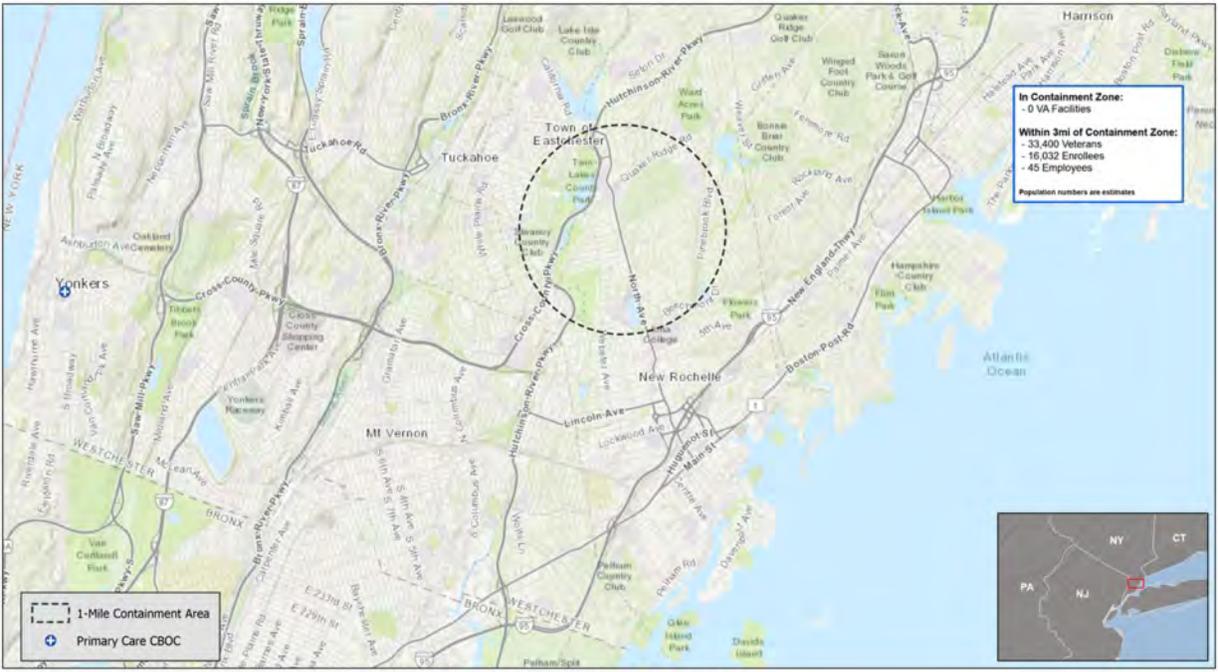
Created on: 3/11/2020 at 9:23 AM  
 Created by: VAOC

Unclassified - VA Sensitive

Document: Coronavirus  
 Data Sources: WHO, CDC, VA



# COVID-19 New Rochelle, NY Containment Area- 3/11/2020



Created on: 3/11/2020 at 10:06 AM  
Created by: VAIOC

Unclassified - VA Sensitive

Document: Coronavirus  
Data Sources: WHO, CDC, VHA

FOLLOW-UP: VAIOC will continue to monitor and provide updates as they become available.

Approved by: (b)(6) Duty Officer

Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

(b)(6)

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MULTI-VA-20-0470-A-0000280

AMERICAN  
OVERSIGHT



- As of 11 Mar, 1636 passengers disembarked; approximately 700 remain on board.
- The District of Columbia declared a public health emergency and issued an advisory:
  - DC officials recommend all “nonessential mass gatherings” of 1,000 or more people be postponed or canceled amid a growing number of COVID-19 cases in the DC area.
  - Several universities in the DC area have already announced plans to cancel in-person classes and moves classes entirely online.
- On 11 Mar, CDC added Europe to the list of Warning Level 3 areas, Avoid Nonessential Travel. CDC provided a list of specified countries in Europe <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/coronavirus-europe>.
- DoS issued Global Health Advisory Level 3, urging U.S. citizens to reconsider travel abroad due to the global impact of COVID-19. According to DoS, many areas throughout the world are now experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks and taking action that may limit traveler mobility, including quarantines and border restrictions. Even countries, jurisdictions, or areas where cases have not been reported may restrict travel without notice.
- On 11 Mar, DHS announced, the President signed a Presidential Proclamation, which suspends the entry of most foreign nationals who have been in certain European countries at any point during the 14 days prior to their scheduled arrival to the U.S.
- The DoD is implementing a 60--day travel ban for service for service members effective 13 March for travel to, through and from CDC identified Warning Level 3 areas.
- City of San Francisco is providing temporary isolation housing in recreational vehicles for people experiencing homelessness or shared living arrangements.

#### Update 46:

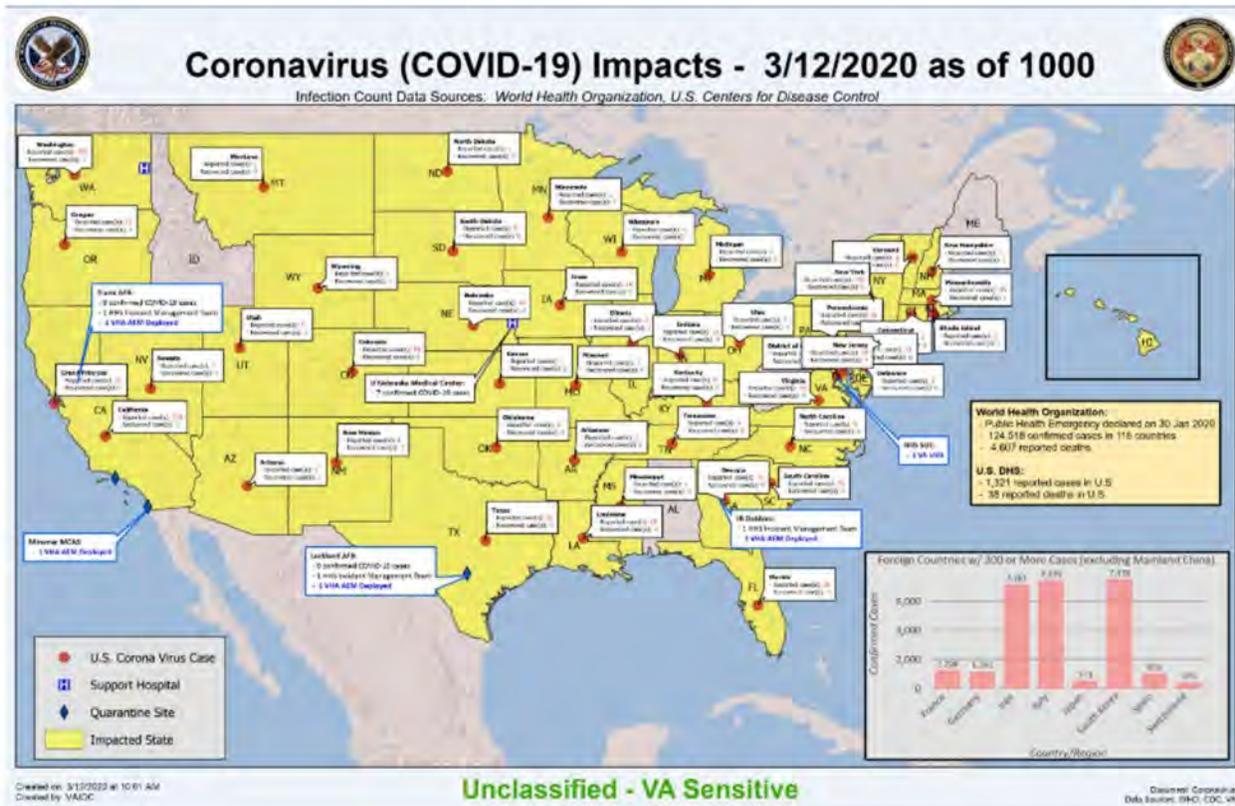
- The WHO is reporting 118,162 confirmed cases globally and 4,290 deaths.
- DHS reports the 1,039 confirmed U.S. cases and 30 deaths.
- On 9 Mar, the Grand Princess cruise ship docked in Oakland, CA; 3,544 persons on board, 1,970 are U.S. citizens.
  - 46 passengers tested: 21 tested positive – 19 crew , 2 passengers, 1 inconclusive
  - 178 passengers are Veterans; 55 currently enrolled in VA Health Care System. Numbers likely to raise with further passenger screening.
  - 25 passengers were sent to CA health care facilities.
  - As of 11 Mar 0700 ET, number of planned/actual quarantined U.S. citizens from Grand Princess:
    - Lackland AFB, TX: 383 planned / 98 actual
    - MCAS Miramar, CA: 402 planned / 42 actual
    - Travis AFB, CA: 962 planned / 764 actual
    - Dobbins ARB, GA: 277 planned / 124 actual
    - The process of disembarking and screening passengers is ongoing, expect numbers to increase.

- HHS is coordinating small flights to transport passengers to their home state, if the home state is willing to take and house their residents from the ship.
- The Governor of NY has taken emergency measures to contain a COVID-19 “cluster” in New Rochelle.
  - The area currently has 108 confirmed cases.
  - The protocols include closing schools, houses of worship and other large gathering facilities within a one-mile radius in New Rochelle for a two-week period, from Thursday, 12 Mar to Wednesday, 25 Mar.
  - The Governor has deployed National Guard troops to a Health Department command post in New Rochelle to assist with the outbreak. The troops are mobilizing to deliver food to homes and help with cleaning public spaces in the containment area.

VA Response:

- HHS Incident Management Team support: One AEM deployed to Travis AFB, and **three** AEMs onsite at MCAS Miramar, CA, Dobbins ARB, GA and **Lackland AFB, TX.**
- Effective 9 Mar, the Crisis Action Team (CAT) will convene daily at 1500 ET.

NOTE: Map below depicts the cases confirmed in the United States and the airports where enhanced screenings are being conducted.





FOLLOW-UP: VAIOC will continue to monitor and provide updates as they become available.

Approved by (b)(6) Duty Officer

Released by: (b)(6) Watch Officer

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VA Integrated Operations Center

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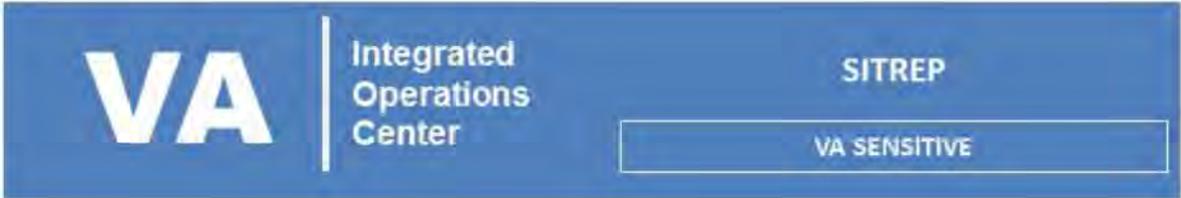
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The banner features the VA logo on the left, followed by the text 'Integrated Operations Center'. To the right, the word 'SITREP' is displayed above a white-bordered box containing the text 'VA SENSITIVE'.

VVA

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