March 11, 2020

Dear Family Members and Guardians of State Veterans’ Nursing Home Residents:

Providing loving care to our resident veterans is our most important goal. As such, the safety and welfare of our resident heroes is our top priority.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers the Coronavirus (COVID-19) to be a low threat to the general public, cases of this respiratory disease are manifesting itself across the State of Florida at an increasing rate. To date, 23 cases have been reported.

In an overabundance of caution to this highly susceptible population, effective today, March 11, 2020, I am restricting access to our State Veterans’ Nursing Homes and Domiciliary until further notice, with the exception of essential visitors, such as family members of those residents undergoing end-of-life care. If you fall into this category of visitor, please know that you will be restricted to that resident’s room only. I am further directing that all individuals entering our veterans’ homes sanitize their hands at entry and follow the facility’s enhanced screening protocols.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has also temporarily restricted access to their nursing and community living center facilities to only essential visitors until further notice. The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) has issued similar guidance.

To facilitate communications with residents, we are instituting alternate communications options for our residents to connect with their loved ones. You may contact the facility of your loved one to coordinate phone calls, Skype or similar communications to connect with your veteran resident.

This “no visitor” stance is undertaken to safeguard our predominantly older population, many of whom have multiple complex health conditions, making them particularly vulnerable to infection. We thank you and appreciate your patience and cooperation as we work to serve those who have served us.

Sincerely,

Daniel W. “Danny” Burgess Jr.
Captain, US Army Reserve
Executive Director

“Honoring those who served U.S.”