



SAINT MARY'S AT ASBURY RIDGE  
SAINT MARY'S EAST

*This communication was sent in an email on July 23, 2020.*

## **Saint Mary's & COVID-19: Update #19**

Hello!

This week Saint Mary's faced some challenges with COVID-19 testing. Both campuses are still awaiting test results from the round of testing that occurred during the week of July 20<sup>th</sup>. We are starting to see that even with priority tags, some test results are now up to a 14 day turnaround time.

From the fourth wave test results returned so far, **Saint Mary's East** has had one resident test positive, which we shared with you last week. This brings the numbers to three active cases at Saint Mary's East. Previously, we shared that two employees tested positive during the third wave of testing and are quarantined at home. Saint Mary's East is awaiting the return of approximately 6 employee results.

**Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge** has received all of the results for residents in Residential Living/Personal Care, but we are awaiting results for residents in Skilled Nursing and employees. All of the initial test results received so far at Asbury Ridge have been negative.

Due to lack of test supplies and severely strained lab capacity to return results in a timely manner, Saint Mary's has had to postpone the fifth round of testing at the East campus scheduled for this week and is not able to conduct any further mass testing at this time. Both campuses will continue to test as needed based on symptoms, exposure determined through contact tracing, and in instances where residents are leaving the building.

So, what does this mean? Essentially, it means we are at a standstill regarding plans to move through the phased re-opening guidelines and for considering any form of visitation. Access to adequate testing and lab capacity are just some of the prerequisites that we must meet before moving into Step 1.

Keep in mind that over the last few weeks at Saint Mary's we have conducted more than 2,000 tests and have only discovered 7 positive cases. That means the percentage of positive cases from testing so far is **less than 0.5%**. While we know that any positive test result is one result too many, this number shows that our strict methods to prevent the spread of transmission continue to be effective. We're grateful for the enormous effort our staff, residents and families have made to cooperate with and adhere to these policies!

We know that many of you (like many of us) are probably growing tired of the impact of this pandemic. It might be tempting to ignore the guidelines, to relax some of the safety measures we've put into practice, and to let our emotions run high. It's normal to feel that way. But we must do our best to encourage ourselves and others to stay the course and do the necessary work. We want to see families visiting again and we look forward to it – but it is our duty to make sure we do it the right way and the safe way.

Thank you!