



June 9, 2020

Greetings everyone,

Just a quick update on COVID case uptick in the county. As you may have read, we have seen 62 new COVID cases in Chittenden County in the past week. They seem to be centered in a cluster in Winooski and right now includes 28 different households.

As of yesterday:

48 were in Winooski, 9 in Burlington and 5 in other Chittenden County towns.

38 were adults, the balance were children.

Ages range from 1-82, with median age 21-23 years.

As of yesterday, no one hospitalized and no deaths.

4 of 5 people are asymptomatic; not sure if this is related to age or if due to contact tracing finding these cases earlier.

**There are an additional 9 cases today, 7 in Chittenden County, 1 in Addison County and 1 in Windsor county.**

While the Vermont Dept. of Health (VDH) believes this is a contained outbreak, it is a large number and we are watching to see if it is spreading any further.

Community testing is underway in Winooski and Burlington at pop-up sites. Given the incubation period, these cases of spread probably happened before Memorial Day. They likely do not account for possible spread due to any protests or other loosening of restrictions since the end of May.

**What does this mean for us at Wake Robin? There will be NO ADDITIONAL changes to any of our restrictions for the next two weeks. We will be watching these numbers daily. If the spread continues to move throughout the county, we may choose to tighten up what is currently being allowed. We obviously will try to give you as much advanced warning as we can, but want to alert you now that this is a possibility and should not come as a surprise.**

I'd also encourage all of you to consider getting tested at a pop-up site. The state is testing ~1,000 people each day. The pop-up sites are for asymptomatic people to sign up for a COVID-19 test to indicate if you currently have a COVID-19

infection. This is not a serology/antibody test and will not tell you if you were sick with COVID-19 in the past.

The more people who test, the better data we have about asymptomatic people. You can find a pop-up site nearby and schedule a time at [www.humanresources.vermont.gov/popups](http://www.humanresources.vermont.gov/popups). Scroll down to the bottom to see where testing is happening and what time slots are available. There are pages and pages so don't be discouraged. I went two Saturdays ago in Essex and it was extremely well organized. My slot was at 10:15 and I was back in my car at 10:30. Very safe, clean, and efficient. I had my test results (negative) in the mail by Wednesday. If your test result is positive, a Public Health Nurse will call you in a few days, and you will get a letter in the mail within a week. If your test result is negative, you will get a letter in the mail within a week. **We ask that you share your test results with the Wellness Center at 264-5139 so we can add this to our tracking system.**

### **Other announcements:**

#### **Dinner at IL homes:**

Please try to be home when dinner is delivered so we can catch errors quickly and it's also a way we can make sure everyone is accounted for. Call 264-5122 if something is missing. And if you see someone's dinner still at their door long past dinner time, please let us know.

Related to dinner/meals, while the Governor has started opening restaurants to limited indoor and outdoor dining, we are not allowing restaurant dining of any kind at the moment. You are welcome to order take out, but please **NO INDOOR OR OUTDOOR DINING AT RESTAURANTS!** It's in groups and without masks. We aren't allowing group dining on campus and we aren't allowing it off campus.

#### **Wake Robin Resident placards:**

If you have driven off campus in the last few days, you may have been given a red placard with "Wake Robin Resident" on it. We are asking that this be put inside the front window of your car so the security staff can differentiate residents and staff coming through the checkpoint. It is **not** permission to go through the checkpoint without stopping. In fact, just the opposite. You still **MUST** stop and give security your plans if you are leaving, and you still must be screened upon your return. Mostly this is allowing staff to leave after their shift more quickly. And please drive very slowly on the road. It's scary for our staff to have cars racing down the road when they are standing in it. And it's scary for our residents who are walking along the road. The speed limit is 15 mph; please adhere to it.

### **Housekeeping:**

Both May and June housekeeping billings went out under the assumption that housecleaning would resume in each of those months. In May, we postponed cleanings based on the Governor's extension of the stay home order as a safety precaution. At this moment, with the recent outbreak in Winooski that is spreading to Burlington, we are again postponing housecleaning. At this time, we prefer not to set a specific date as to when we will resume our housecleaning schedule, because each of the last two times, something unpredictable delayed us.

As we have previously mentioned, our housecleaning crew has been repurposed to clean common areas many times a day plus deliver meals at night, so they are providing more community services than individual services, but if you would like a credit on your statement, please reach out to Lisa Provost in accounting ([lprovost@wakerobin.com](mailto:lprovost@wakerobin.com)).

Finally, I have had several inquiries from residents about whether Wake Robin might be issuing a public statement about the current racial justice protests. I wanted to share with you a message I sent to all staff last Friday.

*What distressing times we are witnessing in this community and communities around the country and globe. The protests that have resulted from George Floyd's, Ahmaud Arbery's, Breonna Taylor's, and so many others' deaths are so powerful and poignant. I remain hopeful that their deaths, and all who are now protesting the injustice of their deaths, will result in significant, institutional and community progress against our shameful history of racism. As Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small, committed group of citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has." That's my hope for the lasting impact of these protests.*

*While our attention is rightly focused nationally, we all live with institutional racism at the local level, although we all don't experience it in the same ways. Vermont and indeed our own communities are no exception. Here at Wake Robin, I was fortunate on Wednesday to have an opportunity to sit with some of our dining staff who had a lot to say about their perception of our culture here. Our organizational values speak to "Community" (fostering mutual respect and appreciation among residents, staff and other members of the Wake Robin community, recognizing family ties and friendships, and ties to a wider civic community) and "Difference" (welcoming diverse backgrounds, believing in the dignity and worth of each individual and honoring the uniqueness of each person*

throughout his or her life, both residents and staff.) However, their experiences working at Wake Robin have not always aligned with these stated values. The staff reminded me that we must never take our eyes off **the practice** of these values, and that our actions, rather than merely our words, demonstrate (or not) our commitment to the community these values describe. For me, and I hope for all those who attended our discussion, three things became apparent: 1) while we sometimes miss the mark, our culture makes room for apology and grace, 2) our culture creates space for conversation and listening, and I am grateful for the staff who shared their thoughts and experience, 3) we must always do better than just talking the talk. I plan to work with the leadership team over the next few months to develop next steps, looking at our staff retention and work experiences, staff training opportunities, management development in relation to our core values, our Board development, and our marketing efforts to recruit a more diverse resident population to name a few strategies. That is my commitment to you.

*In the meantime, I recognize that many of our staff right now are drawn to be “in service to community,” and as such, are deeply involved in social activism. With this COVID pandemic, this can be a crisis of conscience trying to balance, as an employee at Wake Robin, the safety of our residents with the calling to add our voice to social justice protests or demonstrations. Best practice would be that staff avoid large crowds. Short of that, if you feel compelled to participate in the coming days in protests and large gatherings, please stay safe! We trust that you will apply all of the hallmarks of social distancing: remaining in your car or on the perimeter of large groups, using masks and gloves, taking your temperature more frequently than normal, and keeping as much distance between you and others as possible. To help you stay safe, we are offering “Safe” bags, located in HR. These contain the materials mentioned above and can be carried with you. Come on down and grab a bag. Again, it is safest for the Wake Robin community if staff members avoid large groups. But if you feel the risk can be balanced with good judgement, we will trust you to make a decision that is best for you and this community we share with our residents.*

The Board will be discussing if/how to respond at its meeting later in June. I know several residents would like to explore a resident response. I have encouraged them to reach out to you all for further discussion.

**Today’s Humor:** Here’s a funny sketch from an old Johnny Carson show. “I know you’ll remember this one! How they ever kept a straight face?!?” Enjoy.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgYbogp1Ha0>

Thanks everyone. Stay safe.

Martha

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Martha".

Martha E. Maksym  
President and CEO