



April 1, 2021

Dear Lorien Residents and Families:

While Maryland set a new vaccine record this week, I am sad to say that cases are rising again and the positivity rate continues to climb. In fact, Maryland is currently the 14<sup>th</sup> worst state in the nation for COVID-19 infections. Health experts believe that variants of the virus and looser restrictions are causing this uptick.

In Maryland, six of these COVID-19 variants have been detected, including the New York, California, U.K. (B.1.1.7), South Africa (B.1.351) and Brazil (P.1 and P.2) versions. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Director, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the variants are highly contagious, and the U.K. variant is starting to become the predominant strain in many regions of the country. In fact, at his press conference today, Governor Hogan said that of the 677 cases of COVID variants in Maryland, 86% are the U.K. variant.

Given this knowledge, we ask that you keep your guard up while celebrating this holy week of Passover and Easter. Continue to strictly abide by the CDC guidelines and adhere to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention, including physical distancing, wearing a mask, and proper hand washing hygiene. If you are fully vaccinated, the CDC states that you should only gather indoors with other fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask. The CDC defines someone as “fully vaccinated” two weeks after they've received their final dose of the vaccine.

The increase in COVID-19 cases throughout the state has also impacted Lorien’s facilities. As a reminder, all visitations will be suspended if a new case of COVID-19 among residents or staff is identified while the facility immediately begins outbreak testing. Unfortunately, we will also have to stop communal activities and dining during this time. Currently six Lorien locations are on outbreak status.

Thankfully, Maryland entered Phase 2B of its vaccine eligibility on Tuesday and anticipates moving into Phase 2C on April 13. Phase 2B includes Marylanders age 16 and older with underlying medical conditions and Phase 2C will include all Marylanders age 55 and older, as well as essential workers in critical industries.

Our hope is to continue to reunite you and your loved ones. The vaccine plays a critical role in how quickly we can do that. Governor Hogan announced today that pre-registration is now open for all Marylanders age 16 and older. Please consider learning more and registering for an appointment. For your convenience, more information on Maryland’s COVID-19 vaccination plan and vaccination clinic locations, can be found here: [www.COVIDvax.maryland.gov](http://www.COVIDvax.maryland.gov).

Spring is a season of hope and renewal and we welcome it with gratitude. Best wishes to you and your loved ones for a happy and safe Passover and Easter time.

Sincerely,

Lou Grimmel, CEO