



June 26, 2020

Dear Residents of RiverWoods Durham, Birch Hill and RiverWoods Exeter,

First, some good news.

RiverWoods Exeter has received its results from the Health Care surveillance testing and all tests (14 residents and 283 staff) were negative. They will do their next round of testing this weekend. RiverWoods Durham completed its testing for all onsite residents (192) and staff (72) and while we await three results, all other results are negative. Birch Hill had its Health Care surveillance testing done yesterday, and they tested 15 residents and 60 staff. We await those results.

These are definitely strange times, but locally the trends are in the right direction. There has been an average of 25 new cases per day over the past seven days, falling from an average of 39 per day in the previous week and 57 in the week prior. That's progress.

As of June 24th, there were 893 active cases in New Hampshire, the lowest number of cases since April 20th, and a drop of 479 cases in the past four weeks, a reduction of just over a third. That's also progress.

Likewise, case counts in Massachusetts and the other New England states have continued to fall or remain low. That's progress, too.

More locally our case counts in Rockingham, Strafford, and Hillsborough County continue to decline, and Manchester, our New Hampshire (and RiverWoods) hot spot has dropped to 159, from 414 four weeks ago. That's real progress.

But at the same time, nationally we have seen a dramatic rise in case counts in some states (Florida, Texas, Arizona) where reopening is in full swing. If nothing else, this virus is reminding us to always pay attention to a variety of perspectives, particularly as we think about reopening our campuses. We use this type data to help us understand risk and take appropriate measures.

The Executive Directors, Cindy Martin, and I are working to formalize our next stage in reopening the communities. We recognize that there is an important benefit from being able to have more freedom to come and go as you please, but there is also risk to that. Our goal is to balance the need for freedom with the need for safety – so the plan will come with some additional safety measures (like logging participants in activities, classes, and events so we can establish our own internal “contact tracing”) as well as the continued important emphasis on maintaining a six-foot distance, wearing a mask and washing your hands. We will have this new plan out for you next Tuesday, with a goal (assuming a continued trend-down in case counts) to implement the changes as of July 8th.

As we have said before, every four weeks there have been important changes. Next week’s plan will be a big step for us. We will continue to do our best as a family of communities to maintain the important balance between freedom and safety in this crazy time. Until then, stay healthy my friends!


Justine Vogel
TRWG CEO