

**Date:** March 20, 2020

**From:** Acting Hospital Director, Edward Hines JR VA Hospital and Community Based Outpatient Clinic

**To:** All Hines Staff

**Subj:** VISN 12 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Essential Employee Designation

Thank you for continuing to strongly support the facility preparation and response to COVID-19 as we manage the impact of the virus on Hines Veterans and staff.

**Hines VAH and Health System Operating Status:** Hines VA Hospital and our six Community Based Outpatient Clinics are all fully operational and supporting VA's COVID-19 response. As you would expect, many elective services are being rescheduled as our facilities enhance their focus on emergency and inpatient services, as well as adding telehealth options to better address COVID-19 care across the entire VISN 12.

**Essential VA Employees:** I am designating ALL Edward Hines JR VA Hospital and Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) Staff based in Illinois, and all staff who manage, support, and visit these clinics from Indiana and Illinois, as essential to this critical mission and to our COVID-19 preparation, response and recovery. Please use this letter if you are asked why you are working when others stay at home. When you are traveling, ensure that you have your Personal Identification Verification (PIV) card with you and a copy of this letter. The PIV card will be your official identification as a VA employee.

Employees need to work with their respective supervisors to discuss health care operational needs and the employees' specific role in continuing essential operations. It is imperative that we keep our employees safe while focusing on the need to support the mission of serving our Veterans.



Candace Ifabiyi  
Acting Hospital Director  
Edward Hines JR VA Hospital and Community Based Outpatient Clinics