

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Announces Plan to Request Proposals for Outside Management of State Veterans Homes

11/30/2022

TRENTON – Following the deployment of a Mission Critical Team to one of New Jersey's three State-run veterans memorial homes to help address challenges currently facing the facility, Governor Phil Murphy today announced an additional step the Administration will be taking to help ensure the highest quality of care on behalf of the residents in these homes. The Governor has directed the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) to issue a Request for Proposals to seek a vendor who can manage systemic changes and provide qualified, administrative staff to help lead these initiatives.

The vendor will be tasked with providing extensive management of initiatives aimed at improving operations within these homes, including initiatives to train leadership in measurable, clearly-defined ways and to review current job descriptions, policies, and procedures to revise them as necessary. The vendor will be required to provide a qualified team of administrative staff, including a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Nursing Officer (CNO), to oversee day-to-day implementation of these initiatives on site.

"Improving the care our veterans are receiving in each of the three State-run veterans homes remains a crucial priority of my Administration," said **Governor Murphy**. "Sending a Mission Critical Team into Menlo Park to guide and advise facility staff was an important step in working towards this goal, but is certainly not the only step we must take. By seeking experienced leadership – the best of the best – to oversee systemic reforms and bring seasoned staff on board, we will harness the expertise and impartiality of an outside vendor to ensure the implementation of thorough, long-lasting reforms in these homes."

The Administration will be seeking a vendor with extensive, proven experience in long-term care health administration and handling projects of a similar size and scope in long-term care settings with team members who possess clinical, operations, and facility expertise. To ensure the highest level of quality among the supervisory staff provided by the vendor, qualifications of the Licensed Nursing Home Administrator (LNHA) and Director of Nursing must include a minimum of five years – with ten years preferred – of long-term care experience in a 200+ bed facility. Other supervisory staff must possess similarly considerable long-term care experience.

Given the significance and breadth of the vendor's responsibilities, any proposal must demonstrate a clear understanding of the necessary obligations and the vendor's ability to successfully fulfill the requirements of this role.

In light of the challenges at the Menlo Park Veterans Memorial Home, the vendor would immediately assume the role of Interim CEO while working to find a suitable replacement for the position. Changes will be made at Menlo Park before being applied to the other two veterans homes.

The vendor will be required to maintain regular communication with DMAVA leadership and respond to any correspondences and recommendations from the Mission Critical Team, which is currently reviewing all of Menlo Park's processes and embedding best practices for long-term and ongoing improvements at the facility.

"The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and our interagency partners are moving aggressively to ensure the highest standards of care for the veterans, veteran spouses, and Gold Star Families in our care," said **Brig. Gen. Lisa J. Hou, D.O.** "We are in a daily battle with COVID-19 and our team welcomes this anticipated support. As a physician and a combat veteran, I have known no greater mission than the one we face in this fight to protect our heroes."

"Bringing in a first-rate operator focused squarely on the best health care and well-being of our veterans is absolutely critical," said **Senator Joseph Vitale**. "Our veterans held up their end of the bargain, it's our time to hold up ours."

"I agree with Governor Murphy's decision to bring in a professional organization to restore confidence and accountability to the care provided in our state's veterans homes," said **Senator Joe Cryan**. "Our veterans deserve experts who understand all aspects of long-term care management and can bring that expertise into these homes to give New Jersey's veterans the quality of care they deserve in honor of the sacrifices they have made on behalf of this nation."

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