

**Friday Review—3/5/21**

Good afternoon and Happy Friday! Spring training baseball games have begun. Even if you are not a sports fan, you know this is an indicator of warmer weather (eventually) coming our way. Let us hope.

**Thank you, thank you!**—Once again, RIHCA members had a tremendous turnout to testify against mandatory minimum staffing in the House Finance Committee last night. While it was tough to keep testimony confined to two minutes, you all did a great job getting our points across. Testimony was delivered with passion and emotion. The committee did not take any vote on the bill last night. Discussions continue behind the scenes. We will keep you posted if/when anything moves forward with this legislation. Again, thank you all for your time and testimony.

**Learn more**!—As you well know we have asked many of you to reach out to your local legislators quite often in the last 12 months. A common reaction is “I would do it, but I don’t know what to say.” Well, now you can find out. RIHCA is hosting a Legislative Agenda and Grass Roots Boot Camp to help you learn how to chat with legislators, review legislative priorities, and update you on relevant legislation being considered this session and how it affects our industry. This one-hour session will take place on Tuesday March 16th from 10-11am. Best of all, we are offering one CEU. For more information, please reach out to Katie Norman, knorman@rihca.com.

**Committee information**—One of our RIHCA Board members had a “why didn’t I think of that?” suggestion this week. In order to keep everyone as informed as you want to be, we will be sending out periodic listings of all RIHCA committee meetings, with date, time and Zoom information. That way if you have interest in a particular topic, you can tune in to see and hear what is happening. You don’t have to participate—just listen in if you want. But be careful, if you do, you might end up deciding you want to get more active in a RIHCA committee—and that’s fine with us.

**Lunch rooms open!**—Many of you may have been waiting to testify before the House Committee and might have missed the bi-weekly RIDOH call on Thursday. On that call, Steve Morris of the Health Department stated that the order regarding break rooms has ended and you can use them as you wish. Good news for staff interaction and morale.

**Vaccine update**—The state of Rhode Island still has not announced how they plan to vaccinate our new residents who need a first or second shot. In the meantime, some of you have residents who need the vaccine. Therefore, please fill out the RIDOH survey that was sent out this week. RIDOH is collecting information which they will share with the vendor they hire to schedule appointments and administer the vaccine.

A link to the survey is here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3JGZM7K>

**High staff turnover**—We all know that staff turnover is a critical issue. A study conducted pre-COVID shows a turnover rate that sometimes exceeds 100%! [High Turnover at Nursing Homes Threatens Residents' Care - The New York Times (nytimes.com)](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/health/covid-nursing-homes-staff-turnover.html)

**COVID numbers continue to drop**—Here are two stories.

[COVID-19 cases in nursing homes plummet 89% as residents get vaccinated (usatoday.com)](https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2021/02/26/covid-cases-nursing-homes-plummet-89-residents-vaccinate/6814027002/)

[CMS Data Show 82 Percent Drop in Nursing Home COVID Cases (providermagazine.com)](https://www.providermagazine.com/Breaking-News/Pages/CMS-Data-Show-82-Percent-Drop-in-Nursing-Home-COVID-Cases.aspx)

**But many are predicting permanent changes to our business**—The need and demand for private rooms is growing. A new report says this demand will continue to grow post-pandemic. [With Private Rooms 'Non-Negotiable' Moving Forward, Time to Renovate Nursing Homes is Now - Skilled Nursing News](https://skillednursingnews.com/2021/02/with-private-rooms-non-negotiable-moving-forward-time-to-renovate-nursing-homes-is-now/?euid=a3545010f7&utm_source=snn-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=0b8825e1d6)

**Massachusetts legislation**—The state of Massachusetts is considering limiting the number of residents in a nursing home room to no more than two. [COVID-19's devastating impact on Massachusetts nursing homes (wcvb.com)](https://www.wcvb.com/article/covid-19s-devastating-impact-on-massachusetts-nursing-homes/35699973)

**New York legislation**—Lawmakers in New York are considering a ban on new for-profit nursing home licenses or expansions. [Lawmakers Mull State-Level Ban on New For-Profit Nursing Home Licenses, Expansions - Skilled Nursing News](https://skillednursingnews.com/2021/03/lawmakers-mull-state-level-ban-on-new-for-profit-nursing-home-licenses-expansions/?euid=a3545010f7&utm_source=snn-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=d8cf201076)

**Scholarships available**—It’s always nice to end on a positive note. General Treasurer Seth Magaziner announced a scholarship program this week for any dependent under the age of 25 who lost a front-line worker parent or guardian to COVID-19. Students will be eligible for a $2,500 scholarship to be put into a CollegeBound Saver account. The program is known as the Heroes Fund. To get more information, email: frontlinefund@treasury.ri.gov or call 222-2397. The money is free so take advantage of this offer.

Well, that’s it for another week. March can be all over the map when it comes to weather. And this past Monday all meteorologists were reminding us that March 1st is the start of meteorological spring. OK, whatever. At least we know we are going in the right direction towards warmer weather.

Have a great weekend!