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## News for Immediate Release

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### **Auditor General DePasquale Releases Follow-up Report on State Veterans Homes**

*Report echoes significant concerns about response to COVID-19 crisis, deaths at veterans homes*

**HARRISBURG** – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today released a special report that raises questions about how the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) managed the COVID outbreak that led to dozens of deaths at veterans homes, with the vast majority occurring at the Southeastern Veterans' Center (SEVC) in Chester County.

"I applaud the Wolf Administration for hiring independent investigators to review the situation at SEVC and would ask that the report be made public when it is complete," DePasquale said. "Our veterans and their families deserve the best quality of care available, as well as full transparency about any failures that may have put veterans' lives in jeopardy."

DePasquale's report, "[Protecting Our Protectors: A Review of State Veterans Homes](#)," examines how the DMVA implemented his 2016 audit recommendations for the six state veterans homes. It also echoes significant concerns about patient care at SEVC in the early months of the pandemic.

"Our review found good records of compliance and histories of passing grades at most veterans homes since 2016," DePasquale said. "However, a state inspection noted that failures by SEVC's former administration during the beginning of the pandemic put the majority of its residents in immediate, serious jeopardy."

SEVC has reported 42 COVID deaths, more than the five other state veterans homes combined. Some of the homes have reported no deaths, according to Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) [data](#).

A June inspection by DOH included troubling interviews with SEVC staff members about conditions inside the facility and cited failures to follow federal infection-control protocols. An outside contractor has been running SEVC since June, and the facility passed subsequent DOH inspections in August and September.

SEVC's commandant and its director of nursing were indefinitely suspended in May pending the outcome of an ongoing independent investigation initiated by the Governor's Office.

The special report features three observations and four recommendations. Review the new special report, "[Protecting Our Protectors — A Review of State Veterans Homes](#)," learn more about the [2016 DMVA audit report](#) and find the Department of the Auditor General online at [www.PaAuditor.gov](http://www.PaAuditor.gov).

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