GOVERNMENT HOUSE
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Press Contact
Richard Motta
340-474-2399
www.vi.gov
richard.mottajr@go.vi.gov



Governor Schedules Press Conference for Announcement Friday About 175th Anniversary of Emancipation Day

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — During the weekly Government House briefing on Monday, June 27, Communications Director Richard Motta Jr. announced that Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has scheduled a press conference for Friday, July 1, to make a major announcement about plans to commemorate the 175th anniversary of Emancipation Day on July 3, 2023.

"This week is Virgin Islands Freedom Week, which began yesterday, Sunday, June 26, and will continue through Sunday, July 3, which is Emancipation Day here in the territory and will be celebrated by several events and activities—notably the VI Folklife festival, which celebrates the USVI's culture, history, and traditions," Director Motta said.

"But before this weekend's festivities, Governor Bryan will make a major announcement on Friday, July 1, relative to the commemoration of the upcoming 175th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, which the territory will celebrate next year on July 3," Director Motta said.

GVI's ARPA & GEER Fair
The Office of Management and Budget is inviting the Virgin Islands community to an informational session to learn about the various federal funds granted to the territory in response to COVID-19, including the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, local Fiscal Recovery funds, and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds.

Residents can learn more about how these funds are being utilized to positively impact the community through scholarships, workforce development initiatives and financial opportunities for small non-profit entities and local small businesses.

The first session was held on Friday on St. Croix, and the next is scheduled for 4:30 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, June 29, at Yacht Haven Grande.

"I strongly encourage everyone to attend to find out what opportunities are available in the Territory concerning the American Rescue Plan Funding, whether you run a non-profit, are a small business owner, or are just interested to learn more about these funds and how they are being used," Director Motta said.

For more information, contact the Office of Management and Budget at arpa@omb.vi.gov.

Paradise Community Inspections
The Virgin Islands Department of Education is requesting the cooperation of residents in the Paradise community bordering the Evelyn M. Williams Elementary School to allow contractors access to their homes so a required inspection can be conducted before the planned demolition of the school begins in July. Seven homes will be inspected and monitored.

According to the Department of Education Architect, Chaneel Callwood-Daniels, home inspections were initially planned for early June, following notices sent to residents in May requesting inspection appointments be made. Inspections are required so roof and foundational weaknesses can be identified before the start of demolition.

"Some residents have been reluctant to set appointments and allow the contractor access to their homes," Architect Callwood-Daniels said. "We must verify the condition of the homes to identify what issues, if any, already exist before demolition. We will then compare pre-and post-demolition findings to ensure the integrity of residents' homes."

A second attempt at getting residents' cooperation for the necessary home inspections is slated to begin on June 30. Residents are asked to call Eleven Construction at 340-713-1100 or BuildTech at 340-513-6918 to schedule an appointment.

GVI Fellows Program
Director Motta also reminded the community that the deadline to apply for the GVI Financial Fellows' program was extended to July 15.

The GVI Financial Fellows' program is a two-year paid internship open to Virgin Islanders with a bachelor's degree or higher in project management, economics, business administration, construction management, accounting, engineering, finance, and more can work for two years on 6-month rotations within the Government of the Virgin Island's financial and project management agencies, including the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Finance, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, and Office of Disaster Recovery.

Those interested in applying for the program can get more information and sign up at dopusvi.org.

COVID-19 cases as of June 27
- 8.97% seven-day positivity rate

- Currently tracking 173 active cases (135 STX; 36 STT; 2 STJ)
- 437,425 tested
- 20,828 tested positive
- There is 1 COVID-19 patient hospitalized at Luis Hospital on St. Croix.
- There are no COVID-19 patients hospitalized at Schneider Regional Medical Center on St. Thomas.

Infant Vaccinations Approved
For children 6 months to 4 years old, the Pfizer-BioNtech vaccine has been authorized as a three-dose primary series, and for children ages 5-17, the vaccine continues to be authorized as a two-dose primary series. The Moderna vaccine also is authorized for children ages 6 months to 5 years old as a two-dose primary series.

The Health Department is setting venues and schedules for administering infant vaccines, and parents can set up an appointment by calling 340-777-8227 or going to covid19usvi.com/vaccines

Pediatric vaccines are available:
St. Croix – At the CVC at the Charles Harwood Complex from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fridays.
St. Thomas – At the Maternal and Child Health Clinic from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays.
St. John – At the Port Authority gravel lot from 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesdays.

Residents are reminded to bring an ID for the parent or guardian, as well as the infant or child's ID and a copy of the birth certificate.

More COVID-19 Information
Anyone who thinks they may have contracted COVID-19 can call the Epidemiology hotline at 340-712-6299 (STX) or 340-776-1519 (STT-STJ). For more information, visit covid19usvi.com.

For information about the COVID-19 vaccines or to schedule an appointment to get vaccinated, call the VITEMA hotline Mondays-Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 340-777-VACS (8227).

Home testing
Positive test results from a home COVID-19 test should be confirmed, and confirmation is absolutely necessary if medical therapeutic treatment with an oral antiviral or monoclonal antibodies is to be prescribed.

Confirmation testing can be arranged by calling the COVID-19 hotline at 340-712-6299 on St. Croix or 340-776-1519 on St. Thomas. The hotline is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, and testing appointments can be made online at http://www.Covid19USVI.com/testing.

Free Vaccinations
The Community Vaccination Center (CVC) at Schneider Hospital on St. Thomas will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and on Wednesdays on St. John at the V.I. Port Authority gravel lot.

Free vaccinations at the CVC at the Charles Harwood Complex on St. Croix are available by appointment, which can be made by calling 340-777-8227 or by going to http://www.covid19usvi.com/vaccines. Walk-ins also are available.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov

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