Government of the Virgin Islands of the United States
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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PRESS RELEASE

Department of Human Services Addresses COVID-19 Exposures in Group Home

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U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS: The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (DHS) today confirmed that three of the residents of the Anna's Hope Group Home in St. Croix have tested positive for COVID-19. Currently, none of the staff have tested positive, though four results are pending. DHS is currently working with the Virgin Islands Department of Health Division of Epidemiology to get all residents and staff members tested. The Anna's Hope Group Home is a residential facility and so will remain open.

Suspension of visitors has remained in place since March 2020 and prevention methods such as temperature checks and self-attestation surveys for staff entering the facility have been in place since July 2020. Residents recently began accessing specialized services off-site, which is currently being revisited. All measures are being taken to resume the safety that Group Home residents and staff enjoyed for more than a year since the pandemic began.

One resident exhibited mild symptoms. The other two positive residents are currently asymptomatic. The Department of Human Services is in consultation with the Department of Health and additional staffing and mitigating measures have been implemented. Employees that may have come into direct contact with the positive and/or who may have occupied a common space during the estimated period of possible contagion, have been advised, quarantined, tested or are awaiting testing conducted by the Department of Health.

CURRENT ACTIONS BEING TAKEN

- The impacted residents are being cared for in quarantine.
- All other residents are being monitored and are able to maintain social distancing as the residents have individual sleeping quarters.
- A notification was sent to all staff advising of the COVID-19 positive results.

- DHS has arranged for testing of staff and residents through the Department of Health.
- The facility has been and will continue to be cleaned and sanitized according to protocol.
- DHS COVID-19 mitigation protocols continue to be emphasized with staff and include, masking of all staff, temperatures being taken before staff can enter the facility, self-attestation regarding potential exposure etc.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spread between people who are in close contact with one another (about 6 feet). The virus is spread through respiratory droplets that are produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or speaks.

Please be reminded to maintain CDC best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Wear your mask (covering your nose and mouth while in the workplace).
- Maintain social distance.
- Wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds, often.
- Wear appropriate other PPE while in contact with other staff or clients.
- Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol when you cannot your wash hands.
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently used surfaces.
- Share FACTS, not rumors.

For general information, please visit the Department of Human Services website, www.dhs.gov.vi or on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/usvidhs) at US Virgin Islands Department of Human Services.

If you are experiencing any of the coronavirus symptoms listed on the Department of Health website (listed below), self-quarantine and immediately contact the Department of Health:

- V.I. DOH website: https://doh.vi.gov/
- COVID-19 Hotline: (340) 712-6299 or (340) 776-1519

For more information on Covid19, the new strain of coronavirus, please visit the USVI Department of Health's website, www.doh.vi.gov/coronavirus or text COVID19USVI to 888777. #COVID19USVI

The Department of Human Services (VIDHS) exists to provide social services to members in our community with diverse needs. In times of national uncertainty and hardship we act as a safety-net and exist to inspire hope and empower change through non-judgmental, quality delivery of needed services

and resources. Please visit the Department of Human Services website, www.dhs.gov.vi for more information.

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