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Governor Bryan Removes Some COVID-19 Restrictions Amid Decline in Number of Active Cases in USVI

Virgin Islands Department of Health now making booster shots for all three vaccines available to all residents age 18 and older

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – During Tuesday's Government House weekly press briefing, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. relaxed and modified several COVID-19 restrictions as the number of active cases in the Territory continue declining.

Effective at 5 p.m. Friday, October 29, 2021, the moratorium prohibiting sales of alcohol after 11 p.m. is removed. Also effective Friday, bars and restaurants can remain open until the times indicated on their businesses licenses.

The Governor also removed the ban on dancing in establishments; however, persons still must wear their masks while dancing, and the Governor urged residents to try to social distance as much as possible from other couples or other people who also may be dancing.

The Governor also raised the maximum number of people allowed in an establishment to 250 people and said the Virgin Islands Department of Health is also available to approve gatherings of larger groups. However, the Governor clarified that the 250-person limit is for events hosting vaccinated persons only. The limit on the number of people at events that will be hosting a mix of vaccinated and non-vaccinated patrons remains at 100.

"Great work, Virgin Islanders. We are adjusting to our new normal with the reduction of active cases in the Territory, we are in a good place and I think it is a good sign, that we are trending in the right direction," Governor

Bryan said. “I firmly believe that despite the surges, our current number of active cases and our seven-day positivity rate are an indicator that vaccines certainly do work.

“But, please, relaxing of our restrictions is not an invitation for reckless and wanton behavior. These restrictions can easily be reimposed if we see the behavior that is contributing to our surges,” Governor Bryan said. “If we just have adult interaction and respect the fact that we are in a pandemic, we’ll continue on this route.”

Vaccination booster shots

Territorial Epidemiologist Dr. Esther Ellis also announced that the Department of Health is now offering vaccination booster shots to all residents 18 and older. The free shots are available the Department of Health’s Community Vaccination Centers in each district, and staff there can answer any questions residents may have about booster or third vaccinations, Dr. Ellis said.

“We are committed to making boosters accessible without barriers to ensure healthcare equity during our pandemic response,” she said.

Mixing of vaccine products is not recommended by the USVI Department of Health but is considered safe by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the event your vaccine product is not available.

The Department of Health expects to share information in the future regarding COVID-19 vaccines for children ages 5-11.

Anyone 12 and older is eligible to receive the vaccine. Please make sure to have a parent or guardian accompany any minor wishing to get vaccinated and must bring an ID for both the minor and the parent or guardian.

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). Vaccination appointments also can be scheduled online at covid19usvi.com/vaccines.

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

8 percent VIESA wage repayments

Governor Bryan also announced that the Department of Finance currently is preparing the checks for distribution of the 8% VIESA payroll repayments.

“A lot of you didn’t think this was real. I’ll say it again, Finance is preparing to issue the checks for the repayment of the VIESA 8% payroll reductions,” Governor Bryan said.

The Governor urged all current and former government employees who believe they are entitled to repayment to verify their claim at the Department of Personnel website at http://www.dopusvi.org. To do so, click on the tab at the top of the web page for “Employees” then click the link that says “8% Salary Restoration.”

The website also contains instructions for the survivors of government employees who are deceased and are owed money to receive those funds.

COVID-19 cases as of October 25

- 1.67% seven-day positivity rate
- Currently tracking 83 active cases (67 STX; 16 STT; 0 STJ).
- 203,238 individuals tested to date.
- 7,145 individuals tested positive.
- 6,982 individuals have recovered.
- 81 fatalities.
- There are 4 COVID-19 patients hospitalized, with one on a ventilator, at Juan F. Luis Medical Center on St. Croix.
- There are no COVID-19 patients hospitalized at Schneider Regional Medical Center on St. Thomas.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is committed to 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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