GOVERNMENT HOUSE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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# Bryan-Roach Administration Pays out $7 Million in Premium Pay

*Office of Management and Budget continues reviewing and approving applications across all business sectors*

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — During Monday's Government House Weekly Briefing, Communications Director Richard Motta Jr. said the Bryan-Roach Administration has finished reviewing and distributing $7 in premium pay to eligible employees.

"In total, OMB and the Department of Finance has reviewed and processed 3,974 payments to eligible essential workers totaling $6,910,750.00," Director Motta said.

.OMB is continuing the process of reviewing applications for premium pay across all business sectors and approving funds for the Department of Finance to process and distribute.

**Lt. Governor meets with NPS**
Director Motta also reminded residents that Governor Albert Bryan Jr. and Lt. Governor Tregenza A. Roach are out of the territory on official business; however, on Monday the Lieutenant Governor is in Washington DC with local St. Johnians who own property in the Virgin Islands National Park.

The delegation is meeting with officials at the Department of Interior to discuss issues concerning access to their properties located within park land.

"These discussions have been a long time coming, and I trust they will be brought to a reasonable resolution," Director Motta said.

**Community Business Forum**
The Office of the Governor, in partnership with Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and the Department of Tourism, is holding its fifth USVI Community Business Forum to prepare for the upcoming cruising season from 9 to 11 a.m., on Thursday, September 8, at the University of the Virgin Islands' Great Hall, on St. Croix.

Earlier this year, the cruise industry announced plans to increase port calls to island of St. Croix in the upcoming cruising season, and the forum gives the business community an opportunity to engage directly with Administration officials and cruise experts so that they can plan for the upcoming season.

Speakers include representatives from Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, from the Departments of Tourism; the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation; the St. Croix Chamber of Commerce; and the University of the Virgin Islands,' School of Business.

Governor Bryan is encouraging all businesses, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders – shop owners, taxi drivers and food establishments owners — to join the conversation and to share their ideas.

For more information and to register for the free forum, visit www.vi.gov/cbf.

**Tropical weather outlook**
Director Daryl Jaschen said the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) currently is closely tracking the development of the tropical disturbance, Invest 91L, which currently is forecast to travel about 350 miles northeast of St. John, passing by on Friday or Saturday.

Director Jaschen reminded residents that hurricanes and storm systems are unpredictable and urged residents to watch the storm's development and prepare their homes and families for a possible weather event.

VITEMA also is tracking a small low pressure system located about 600 miles east of Bermuda that is expected to dissipate by the weekend and currently poses no threat to the Territory.

A tropical wave is forecast to move off the west coast of Africa Monday evening or early Tuesday. Some gradual development of this system is possible after that time while it moves generally westward to west-northwestward across the far eastern tropical Atlantic. This is a normal occurrence this time of year and VITEMA and the NWS-PR will continue to monitor.

**'Blue Skies' sandbag distribution**
VITEMA, the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the V.I. Fire Service are now conducting, Operation Blue Skies, where you can bring your vehicle to one of the named locations and receive 6 pre-packed sandbags per household.

Distribution sites are now open for the second week at DPW from 9 a.m. to noon Tuesdays and 1 to 4 p.m. Thursdays.

The V.I. Fire Service distribution is open on Saturdays only, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Locations for drive-thru distribution are:
**St. Croix**

- Department of Public Works (Anna's Hope)
- Cotton Valley Fire Station (Saturday Only)
- Grove Place Fire Station (Saturday Only)

**St. Thomas**

- Department of Public Works (Sub Base)
- Fortuna Fire Station (Saturday Only)
- Omar Brown Sr. Fire Station (Barbel Plaza) (Saturday Only)
- Curriculum Center (Tutu) (Saturday Only)

**St. John**

- Coral Bay Fire Station (Saturday Only)
- Department of Public Works (Susannaberg)

Operation Blue Skies will conclude Saturday, September 17, 2022.

**ERAP Community Pop-up Events**

The Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority (VIHFA) is hosting a series of community pop-up events where residents who were impacted by COVID-19 can learn about the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) and apply with the members of VIHFA's team. Landlords and residents can apply for assistance with unpaid rent, utilities, internet and cooking gas dating back as early as March 2020.

The events will be held:
Tuesday, August 30, in the St. Thomas-St. John District at Cost-U-Less from 3 to 5 p.m. and Wednesday, August 31 at Tutu Park Mall from noon to 2 p.m.

On St. Croix, the pop-events will be Tuesday August 30 from noon to 2 p.m. at Cost-U-Less and Wednesday, August 31 from noon to 2 p.m. at Home Depot.

For a list of required documents for the ERAP application or to apply via VIHFA's new online portal, visit vihfa.gov/erap. You can also call 340-200-0007 for more information.

**Personnel Career Expo**

The Division of Personnel host a successful "2022 Career Expo & Mixer" on August 25, at UVI's Sports & Fitness Center on St. Thomas and is hosting a similar event on from noon to 6 p.m. Wednesday, August 31, at the UVI Great Hall on St. Croix.

The Career Expo offers attendees the opportunity to meet and interact directly with Human Resources professionals from the Government of the Virgin Islands' departments and agencies and the semi-autonomous agencies. Individuals will have the opportunity to apply and interview for the many vacancies on-site the same day.

The EXPO will feature the following:
• Agencies will be able to showcase all vacancies.
• Agencies will have 15 minutes presentations on-stage to highlight their services and benefits.
• Interview stations will be set up to facilitate onsite job interviews.
• Attendees will be able to apply onsite in the NEO Gov system.
• 30-minute workshops and breakout sessions will be held throughout the day.

For more information, visit http://www.dopusvi.org or contact 340-774-8588 or 340-718-8588.

**Monkeypox**
There currently are no confirmed cases of monkeypox in the U.S. Virgin Islands. To date, the Department of Health received 11 suspect samples to test for the virus that all tested negative.

The department currently is preparing a schedule for vaccinations for specific eligible populations for pre- and post-infection. Notification of who is eligible and information on how to make an appointment will be made available later this week.

For more information about monkeypox, use the "Communicable Disease" tab on the Department of Health website at doh.vi.gov. To learn more about being eligible for a monkeypox vaccination, call 340-774-9000 ext. 4663.

**COVID-19 cases as of August 29**
- Currently tracking 239 active cases (130 STX; 107 STT; 2 STJ)
- There are 6 COVID-19 patients hospitalized at Luis Hospital on St. Croix.
- There are 5 COVID-19 patients hospitalized at Schneider Regional Medical Center on St. Thomas.

**COVID-19 vaccinations**
All vaccinations will take place as a regular part of the Department of Health's clinic schedules, and vaccinations are recommended for all residents ages 6 months and older. For a COVID-19 vaccination appointment, call 340-244-0016

**COVID-19 Testing**
The schedule is as follows:
**St. Croix –** Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Charles Harwood Memorial parking lot
**St. Thomas –** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday – 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Schneider Regional Medical Center loading dock
**St. John –** Wednesday from noon to 3 p.m.

**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.

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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