GOVERNMENT HOUSE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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



Bryan-Roach Administration Distributing Another Round Of $25 Million in Income Tax Refunds

New CDC Guidelines for International Travel Now in Effect; USVI Requirements for Domestic Travel from Mainland, Other Territories Will Remain Unchanged

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – During the Government House weekly press briefing on Monday, Government House Communications Director Richard Motta Jr. announced that the Bryan-Roach Administration has begun distributing another round of income tax refunds totaling $25 million.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has said he expects the Government of the Virgin Islands to become current on all outstanding income tax refunds in 2022. This latest run of refunds comprises 10,288 checks, most of which cover refunds due for tax year 2019.

“As you know, this is part of the Bryan-Roach Administration’s continued push to get caught up on past due refunds and its goal to pay income tax refunds in the same year they are filed,” Director Motta said. “So, if you have filed your 2019 return on time, are not under audit, or have any other liens or issues, chances are you are one of those 10,288 who will be getting a refund this week or next.”

International Travel Restrictions
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has shortened the testing window for all international air travelers entering the United States from three days to one.

According to the updated CDC order, the reduced timeframe aims to “provide less opportunity to develop an infection with the omicron variant prior to arrival in the United States.”

“Effective today, air passengers 2 years and older flying into the United States from a foreign county, regardless of vaccination status or nationality, will have to provide a negative test taken within 24 hours of travel,” Director Motta said. “Travelers who can prove that they have recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days are exempt. The travel requirements for entry into the U.S. Virgin Islands from the U.S. mainland remain the same. This new travel order from the CDC only affects travelers coming to the territory from a non- U.S. destination.”

Travelers entering the territory from the U.S. mainland or any of its insular territories are still required to provide a negative PCR or antigen test taken within 5 days of travel to the USVI (United States Virgin Islands) or provide proof of a vaccination record completed here in the territory.

Organized Events Requirements
Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion provided information for groups planning organized events during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that those events conform to the Department of Health guidelines and avoid possibly being shut down by the COVID-19 Task Force. Special events that fall outside of Governor Bryan’s executive orders require approval by the Department of Health’s Environmental Health Division.

A “Special Events Request Form” should be submitted for these events no later than two weeks before the planned event, and can be submitted by sending an email to inspections.deh@doh.vi.gov. Applications for events are also available online at covid19usvi.com.

“The Department will continue to support you. We ask that you, too, become stewards of reducing the transmission of the virus by adhering to Governor Bryan’s and the department’s COVID-19 mitigation protocols,” Commissioner Encarnacion said. “Please also send in copies of promotional materials with your form. The COVID-19 Task Force will continue to conduct compliance inspections. If found to be out of compliance, a cease-and-desist order will be issued for the event.”

Havensight Attempted Armed Robbery
Director Motta also read the following statement from Governor Albert Bryan Jr. about the attempted armed robbery of a Havensight jewelry store at about 11 a.m. on Saturday in which a security guard and a bystander were seriously injured:

“We never have and won't ever tolerate this type of criminality in our community. Our community is too small for these heinous and reckless acts of violence,” Governor Bryan said. “The perpetrators of these crimes can rest assured that they will be sought and brought to justice.”

The Governor thanked the VIPD for their response and asked anyone in the community with information to please come forward and assist the Virgin Islands Police Department in its investigation by calling the anonymous tip line at Crime Stoppers USVI at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or the Virgin Islands Police Department at 340-774-2211.

Governor Bryan also asked residents to pray for the safe and speedy recovery of the two victims.

St. Thomas-St. John Police Chief Barrington Thomas Sr. provided an updated into the VIPD’s investigation and said both victims are in stable condition and two “persons of interest” are in custody and the police department is currently looking for other perpetrators.

Governor's Children's Christmas Parties
Director Motta also invited the community to Governor Bryan's Children's Christmas Parties this year, starting with a drive-through gift-giving event from 6 to 9 pm. on Thursday, December 9, at Havensight on St. Thomas.

The Governor's Children's Christmas Party continues in Cruz Bay, St. John, from 6 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, December 16, with a similar drive through event to take place at the entrance of the St. John Battery. On St. Croix, from 6 to 9 p.m. on Sunday, December 19 the drive-through event will come down King Street in front of Government House in Christiansted and onto Church Street and then Company Street.

Pop-up Vaccinations
St. Thomas – Noon to 3 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Cost-U-Less parking lot.
St. John – 1 to 4 p.m. at the V.I. Port Authority Gravel Lot (also has free testing).
St. Croix – 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at The Market (Formerly Plaza Extra West) and 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays at the Farmers Market and the Agriculture Festival Fairgrounds.

Residents can get vaccinated at no cost at the Community Vaccination Center (CVC) located in each district; both facilities accept scheduled appointments and walk-up requests for the vaccine.

Anyone 5 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 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. The Department of Health will bring the COVID-19 vaccine to children and adults who are homebound.

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.

COVID-19 cases as of December 6
- 0.81% seven-day positivity rate
- Currently tracking 37 active cases (28 STX; 8 STT; 1 STJ).
- 228,771 individuals tested to date.
- 7,549 individuals tested positive.
- 7,425 individuals have recovered.
- 87 fatalities.
- There are 2 COVID-19 patients hospitalized 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 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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