GOVERNMENT HOUSE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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Department of Health Advises Residents to Get Flu Shots

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — During Monday's weekly Government House briefing, Deputy Health Commissioner Reuben Molloy said the department is advising USVI residents to get flu vaccinations in advance of the upcoming flu season.

Deputy Commissioner Molloy said it is safe to get the flu vaccine in addition to COVID-19 vaccines and boosters.

"As our annual Tourism Season occurs, we will be welcoming guests from all areas of the world. This increased influx of visitors raises the possibility of exposure to a variety of transmissible respiratory viruses, like COVID-19, the seasonable flu and the respiratory virus also known as RSV," the Deputy Commissioner said. "If you have not gotten vaccinated and boosted, this is the time to do so. Vaccines are readily available at all DOH clinics for anyone ages 6 months and older."

Deputy Commissioner Molly also said that during the last few weeks, hospitals across the country have been inundated with seasonal influenza patients.

Last week, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hit record levels of admissions not normally seen during the flu season.

"Traditionally, the flu season begins to see an increased number of hospital admissions in December, not October or earlier," Deputy Commissioner Molloy said. "The increase in the flu-related hospitalizations span all age groups but appear to hit young children hardest."

The flu season is occurring earlier this year and is posing an even greater public health threat than usual, he said.

COVID-19 vaccinations are available by scheduling an appointment:
St. Croix – 340-244-0016
St. Thomas – 340-777-8804 ext. 2600
St. John – 340-776-6400

The COVID-19 testing schedule remains the same:
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. in the Port Authority gravel lot.

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.

GERS Pension Annuities
During the weekly briefing, Government House Communications Director Richard Motta Jr. said that the computer glitch that was delaying pension annuity disbursements from the Government Employees' Retirement System has been resolved.

The technical issue that caused a slight delay in the direct deposit of October's pension annuity to government retirees apparently was a software issue at at one of the main banks that works with the GERS.

"That is now corrected, so, if you are one of those retirees affected, your direct deposit should be available now, according to the latest information from the GERS," Director Motta said.

Retirees who have any issues can contact the GERS at 340-776-7703 in the St. Thomas-St. John District or 340-718-5480 on St. Croix.

D. Hamilton Jackson Day
Director Motta also urged residents to participate in Tuesday's commemoration of D. Hamilton Jackson Day – also known as Liberty Day and Bull and Bread Day – in Grove Place on St. Croix.

The ceremony officially begins at 1 p.m. in D. Hamilton Jackson Park, just around the corner from the Grove Place Fire Station. The event is the first time that

"It is a local holiday where we take the time to celebrate the life and the legacy of David Hamilton Jackson. This year is the first time in 3 years – or since the pandemic – that the traditional Liberty Day celebration will be held in Grove Place – or the Mecca – as Raymond Williams so passionately refers to it," Director Motta said. "So, we encourage the entire community to come out and celebrate D. Hamilton Jackson and his many contributions to our Virgin Islands community's socioeconomic and political fabric."

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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