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Occupancy Businesses Ordered Not to Accept More Guests, Non-Essential Businesses to Cease Operations Until April 6, Bryan Orders in Last Update; Residents Encouraged to Shelter in Place

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The Windward Passage Hotel in St. Thomas. Governor Albert Bryan on Saturday night ordered all occupancy businesses to stop accepting guests.

Governor Albert Bryan on Saturday night ordered non-essential businesses to close and residents to stay at home as the administration ramps up its response to the coronavirus, the pathogen that causes the deadly Covid-19 disease.

According to Government House, Mr. Bryan stressed that while there is no curfew in place, Virgin Islanders need to continue adhering to the containment strategies put forth by the Virgin Islands Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control to contain the spread of coronavirus in the territory.

“If we all do our part and adhere to these containment strategies, the U.S. Virgin Islands will weather this storm, as we have many times before,” said the territory's leader. “If you are not working at an establishment or in a job deemed essential during this state of emergency, you are asked to stay home and avoid any unnecessary social interactions.”

In addition to asking residents to shelter in their homes, the governor took further measures in his administration's effort to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the territory. According to Government House, the measures include:

- Non-essential businesses should cease in-person business operations until at least Monday, April 6, and should require their employees to stay home.
- Hotels, guest houses, villas, bed and breakfasts, and similar businesses should not accept new guests for the next 30 days.

“We are asking our residents to stay-at-home unless absolutely necessary,” Governor Bryan said, “We do not take these decisions lightly. We are motivated by the critical need to keep our community safe.”

The administration issued the following guidance regarding essential businesses:

Places that sell or produce food:

- Grocery stores, convenience stores, and pet supply stores. This includes stores that sell groceries and sell other non-grocery products, and products necessary to maintain the safety and sanitation of homes.
- Restaurants that prepare and serve food or beverages, but only for delivery, drive-through, or carry out.
- Food cultivation, including farming, livestock, and fishing.

Places with medical purpose:

- Home-based care for seniors, adults, people with a disability, or children.
- Residential facilities and shelters for seniors, adults, people with a disability, and children.

Media outlets:

- Newspapers, television, radio, and other media services.

Core life services:

- Gas stations, and auto-supply, and auto-repair.

- Banks and credit unions.
- Hardware stores and building supplies.
- Laundromats, dry cleaners, and laundry service providers.
- Plumbers, electricians, custodial/janitorial workers, handyman services, funeral home workers and morticians, carpenters, landscapers, gardeners, property managers, private security personnel, and other service providers who provide services to maintain the safety, sanitation, and essential operation to properties and other essential businesses.
- Businesses that supply office or computer products needed by people who work from home.
- Businesses that supply other Essential Businesses with the support or supplies necessary to operate.
- Businesses that ship, truck, provide logistical support or deliver groceries, food, goods or services directly to residences, essential businesses, healthcare operations, essential infrastructure.
- Airlines, taxis, and other private transportation providers providing transportation services necessary for activities of daily living.
- Businesses that provide parts and services for essential infrastructure.
- Professional services, such as legal or accounting services.

Childcare for essential workers:

- Childcare facilities providing services that enable employees exempted to work.

Places that provide shelter:

- Hotels, shared rental units, and similar facilities.
- Homeless shelters and social services for economically disadvantaged people.

Mr. Bryan and Dept. of Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion will provide an update on the territory's response to COVID-19 at 1 p.m. Monday at Government House in Christiansted, according two Government House.