

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Schneider Regional, JFL, Announce Dramatic New Measures to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19; Most Services at Myrah Keating Clinic on St. John Suspended

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Schneider Regional Medical Center (SRMC) and the Juan F. Luis Hospital said Thursday they were implementing a series of changes for visitors and employees — including the screening of all people entering the hospital for flu-like symptoms — designed to stem the spread of COVID-19.

“As of Thursday, March 19th, and until further notice, visitors and employees may only access the Roy L. Schneider Hospital through the designated entry point at the front

lobby on the first floor of the hospital,” SRMC said. “All persons entering the Hospital will be screened for flu- like symptoms. Persons with visible signs of illness such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath will be instructed to contact their primary care provider or the Department of Health for further evaluation.”

Employees of SRMC will be asked to notify their immediate supervisor and contact the Employee Nurse at extension 5084 for further instructions, the hospital statement read.

Emergency care services will continue at the hospital Emergency Room.

SRMC has also implemented visitor restrictions to include:

- Visiting hours are now 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- One visitor per patient.
- No visitor under the age of 18 is permitted.

SRMC is postponing elective, outpatient, non-emergent services. Hemodialysis, wound care services, and infusion therapy services will still be provided. Patients who have scheduled procedures will be contacted by their physicians’ offices for next steps.

At the Myrah Keating Smith Community Health Center (MKS) on St. John, services at the clinic have been suspended, with limited exceptions.

“MKS patients with standing orders will be able to continue to complete their labs. Outpatient laboratory services at MKS have been suspended. MKS is also not taking any new appointments or processing any WIC or health cards at this time. MKS patients are asked to call (340) 776-8311 Ext. 6606 before walking-in or for prescription medication refills. MKS will continue to see emergency cases,” SRMC said.

SRMC has closed access to public spaces, such as its cafeteria, gift shop, and meeting spaces. All events and meetings on the hospital campus that had been open to the public and to community groups have been cancelled.

SRMC urged the public to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for personal safety:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Juan F. Luis Hospital

JFL announced that visitors and visitation hours have been revised to better care for its patients, and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

General visitation hours have been revised to 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., unless the visitor is a parent or guardian of a pediatric patient or infant. Prior to being allowed to enter the facility, each visitor will be screened.

The hospital also issued new guidelines on who can visit and when:

- Patients may only have 1 visitor with them during visiting hours
- No visitors under the age of 18 or over the age of 65 will be allowed to visit patients.
- Persons with any immunocompromised will not be allowed to visit patients.
- Persons who are pregnant will not be allowed to visit patients.
- Visitors must wash their hands (or use sanitizer) before entering and after leaving rooms and hospital buildings.

Isolated patients at the hospital will be allowed only one visitor at a time for up to 2 hours per day. "Visitors will be given special protective masks, gloves and gowns that must be worn at all times," the hospital said.

No personal items, bags or cell phones will be allowed into the room of isolated patients. As such, all items must be left in your vehicle. "These measures are taken to protect the spread of COVID-19 as we are aware that this infectious disease lives on surfaces for prolonged periods of time. Following these changes will reduce the transmission of disease to visitors and their friends and family outside the hospital," JFL said.

If a visitor begins to show signs and symptoms of COVID-19, you will be asked to depart promptly and notify the V.I. Department of Health, according to the hospital.