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In Effort to Slow Spread of Covid-19, CBP Reminds Boaters of Reporting Requirements in the Caribbean

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U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) on Wednesday issued a public reminder of the pleasure boat reporting requirements upon return to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

These reporting requirements are essential as CBP and its partners work to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Operators of small pleasure vessels, arriving in the United States from a foreign port or place must, by law, report their arrival to CBP immediately. (19 U.S.C. 1433) After the master of the vessel reports the arrival, CBP Officers provide further guidance regarding the next step in the inspection process.

CBP Officers use a combination of traveler history records, officer questioning and observation, and self-declarations to identify arriving individuals who meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) COVID-19 travel history and screening guidelines. Individuals who are symptomatic or who otherwise meet the CDC guidelines will be referred to the CDC or local health authorities for additional health screening.

In Puerto Rico, boaters that report their entry in compliance with federal guidelines will be provided the contact information of the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DRNA, for its Spanish acronym) at (787) 724-5700 or (787) 771-1124.

"In Puerto Rico, at the request of the local government, CBP Officers will relay the phone numbers provided by the DRNA after the inspection process is completed," stated Roberto Vaquero, Assistant Director of Field Operations for Border Security in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. "CBP continues to work closely with the Governments of Puerto Rico and the USVI to protect the residents of our islands against this public health emergency."

To facilitate reporting, the CBP ROAM app is a free mobile application available that provides an option for pleasure boaters to report their U.S. entry to CBP via their personal smart phone or a tablet located at local businesses.

To use the CBP ROAM app, travelers input their biographic, conveyance, and trip details and submit their trip for CBP Officer review. The CBP Officer may initiate a video chat to further interview travelers. After the CBP Officer reviews the trip, travelers will receive a push notification and an email with their admissibility decision and next steps, if applicable.

For any questions or concerns about the CBP ROAM app, please email us at cbproam@cbp.dhs.gov.

If there are problems with ROAM boaters can still call their nearest port of entry.

- Puerto Rico 1 (877) 529-6840
- St. Thomas 1 (877) 305-8774
- St. John 1 (877) 305-8773
- St. Croix 1 (340) 719-2857

Failure to report entry can result in civil penalties as defined in Title 19, United States Code Section 1436, to include a penalty of \$5,000 for the first violation and \$10,000 for each subsequent violation with the conveyance subject to seizure and forfeiture, CBP said. In addition, to being liable for a civil penalty, any master who intentionally commits a violation under subsection (a) of the above stated section, upon conviction is liable for a fine of not more than \$2,000 or imprisonment for one year or both.

To report any illicit activity in the Caribbean to CBP please call 1(800)981-1313.