

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Wounded Man May Need Airlifting Following Shooting in Harbor View; Territory Sees 17 Homicides So Far in 2020

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Juan F. Luis Hospital Emergency Room By. ERNICE GILBERT/ VI CONSORTIUM

A shooting in Harbor View on St. Croix Tuesday night left a man injured so badly that he will likely be airlifted for further medical care, V.I.P.D. Public Information Officer Toby Derima has confirmed to the Consortium.

The incident occurred at about 10:49 p.m. as the victim drove into the housing community, police said.

The incident follows a shooting in Sion Farm on Tuesday morning where no one was injured, and [the discovery of a man's body](#) in the bushes across from the Cramer Park Beach, which police ruled as a homicide after learning that the victim had been shot.

The discovery of the homicide victim at Cramer Park brought the territory's total homicide this year to 17, according to information provided to the Consortium by the VIPD. The breakdown is as follows:

- St. Croix: 7
- St. Thomas: 9
- St. John: 1

Seven homicides have occurred since March 23, just about when the coronavirus pandemic became more pronounced in the territory, though officials have not tied the violence to the virus's devastating impact on the economy. Five of the seven deaths occurred on St. Thomas, and the remaining two on St. Croix, according to VIPD statistics.

There has also been a string of robberies affecting both districts, including [home invasions](#), [fast-food restaurant](#) and [individual robberies](#). During Governor Albert Bryan's Monday coronavirus press briefing, the governor said while there wasn't any correlation between the robberies and economic fallout confirmed by data, economic hardship is usually accompanied by an increase in violent behavior.

"We know that these economic type crimes are going to happen during this period," Mr. Bryan said. He said he wasn't aware of any specific initiative by the police department to help quell the increased violence, but said he would get with Police Commissioner Trevor Velinor to provide an update.

Mr. Bryan said the incidents spoke to his administration's determination to get money into the hands of residents, and to reopen the economy.

"We understand that people are really hurting out there. Not that it's an excuse to commit robbery, but this is a reality of our community. So getting people back out, getting them back to work, getting them some checks and money in their hands is one of our utmost priorities," he said.