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Fifth Coronavirus Patient Dies at Juan F. Luis Hospital

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A fifth person has died from the coronavirus in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This person, an elderly man, was on a ventilator machine and died at the Juan F. Luis Hospital today, Governor Albert Bryan has confirmed to the Consortium after the publication inquired.

The man was said to be the husband of the fourth person to die of the virus in the territory, according to multiple persons with knowledge of the matter. She was identified as [a 67-year-old woman](#) who died at her home late April and tested positive after her passing. The man was 72, according to a release the Dept. of Health issued Saturday night, and he suffered with hypertension and diabetes.

Now, the deceased couple's son is said to be hospitalized at JFL and is on a ventilator as well.

The fifth coronavirus death comes five days following Governor Bryan's "Safer at Home" plan, [which took effect May 4](#) and allows non-essential businesses to re-open. The move increases the risk of community spread of the contagion, but the plan calls for mandatory face masks when entering business establishments. To that end, Mr. Bryan earlier this week told the Consortium that people are safer now than they were a week ago, pointing to the mandatory wearing of masks — which residents, for the most part, have been complying with — and the closed geography of the territory, which does not include interstate travel, transit systems and large buses.

"We don't have a mass transit system, we don't have a large bus system, we don't have interstate [travel], so our factorization is a lot different. For the most part we still have a choked off tourism aspect because we don't have that many people coming into the territory because they can't go to a hotel," Mr. Bryan said.

The governor also differentiated protocols that are in place as part of his "Safer at Home" plan from those of other U.S. jurisdictions. "Most states don't have a mandatory face mask inside commercial establishments and most states are allowing you to go into restaurants and eat. We still don't have that; our bars are still closed," the governor said.

As of Friday, there were 68 confirmed coronavirus cases in the territory, 57 of whom have recovered, according to the Bryan administration. Thirty-six cases were pending and 1024 have returned negative. Of the five deaths, two were in St. Thomas and three on St. Croix, according to data provided by the Dept. of Health.