

The Virgin Islands Consortium

V.I. National Park to Commence Reopening of Facilities June 6

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Following guidance from the White House, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and territory public health authorities, Virgin Islands National Park is increasing available services.

The National Park Service (NPS) said it's working with federal, state, and local public health authorities to closely monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and is using a phased approach to increase access on a park-by-park basis.

Beginning June 6th, 2020, Virgin Islands National Park will reopen access to:

- Restrooms, and showers at Trunk Bay Beach.
- Restrooms and changing stalls at Hawksnest Beach.
- Restrooms or Porta-Johns at these locations: Cinnamon Bay, Maho Bay, Francis Bay,, Salt Pond Bay, Lameshur and Annaberg.

In addition, the amenity fee at Trunk Bay will continue to be waived for now. However, the amenity fee collection may resume as the park increases access in the coming weeks.

The following spaces continue to be available:

- All park trails and beaches are open.
- Park and Monument waters remain open, and mooring fees are being collected.

Garbage collection will resume, however guests are encouraged to take their trash home.

Those with commercial use authorizations may resume doing business in the park and monument. Operators should wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and follow territorial public health guidelines. Individuals may again seek to obtain special use permits.

With public and employee health in mind, the following facilities remain closed at this time:

- Cruz Bay Visitor Center and store is closed
- Food Service is unavailable and Trunk and Cinnamon Bays

"We have felt the love from local residents who have kept park beaches, trails and public spaces safe and clean over the past two months," says Nigel Fields, park superintendent. "Now as the USVI begins to open the doors to broader tourism, we want everyone to remain safe while enjoying the park's many resources."

"The health and safety of our visitors, employees, volunteers, and partners continues to be paramount. At Virgin Islands National Park, our operational approach will be to examine each facility function and service provided to ensure those operations comply with current public health guidance and will be regularly monitored," NPS said. "We continue to work closely with the NPS Office of Public Health using CDC guidance to ensure public and workspaces are safe and clean for visitors, employees, partners, and volunteers."

While these areas are accessible for visitors to enjoy, a return to full operations will continue to be phased and services may be limited, according to NPS. When recreating, the public should follow local area health orders from the V.I. Department of Health, practice Leave No Trace principles, avoid crowding and avoid high-risk outdoor activities. All park rules and regulations are in effect.

The CDC has offered guidance to help people recreating in parks and open spaces prevent the spread of infectious diseases. "We will continue to monitor all park functions to ensure that visitors adhere to CDC guidance for mitigating risks associated with the transmission of COVID-19 and take any additional steps necessary to protect public health," NPS said.

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