

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Thomas Carnival Village Admission Fee Is \$5 Per Night, Children 13 And Younger Get In Free

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ST. THOMAS -- Eventgoers looking to attend St. Thomas Carnival Village activities this year will be asked to pay an admission fee of \$5 nightly, Halvor Hart, executive director of the St. Thomas Carnival Committee confirmed to this publication Wednesday.

Children 13 years and younger will not be charged, and there will be two nights of free admission, Mr. Hart said. The announcement follows Mr. Hart's [confirmation on Tuesday](#) that for the first time in V.I. history, residents will be charged to attend carnival Village events.

Tickets will be purchasable online, which can be printed on any printer and redeemed at any of the Village's multiple entrances with barcode scanners, according to Mr. Hart. Tickets will also be downloadable on mobile phones, and will be redeemable at the entrances as well. Separately, Mr. Hart said this year's artist lineup for Village activities should be complete by next week. However, he revealed Destra, Farmer Nappy, Patrice Roberts and Olatunji as some of the headliners. The lineup will also include top local acts, he said.

Reason for admission fee

Pointing to past events where violence disrupted festivities, Mr. Hart told The Consortium on Tuesday that the committee was determined to prevent such situations from reoccurring, stating that extra security of about 15 to 20 persons was the best way to do so. But with security comes a price, and the committee was forced to identify a funding source because it did not budget for the cost of the added safety measures.

"As you know, St. Thomas usually has incidents that happen, so the idea is to try to close off Village, fence up the Village, and search people as they're coming in to try to minimize the gun violence and the weapons coming in," Mr. Hart said. He pointed to last year's Village closing, which ended abruptly during a performance by Soca artist Destra, [after a shooting incident left three men injured and one dead](#).

Fully securing the Village, Mr. Hart admitted, will be a difficult task, "but we have to start somewhere, and we have to be able to cover the security cost because that was not a cost that we had budgeted."

Mr. Hart acknowledged the V.I.P.D.'s presence at carnival events, but he said the force is usually strained during the festive season. "We'll definitely need 15 to 20 guys around the Village," he said, which would compliment the V.I.P.D.'s own security efforts.

"We're just trying to make the place more secure for who coming to enjoy themselves, that they don't have to worry about outside forces. [The Village is] wide open now and a lot of things happen," Mr. Hart said. He said Village attendees have not felt safe near the restroom area because it appears to serve as a breeding ground for unlawful behavior. "The guys congregate and smoke back there, but security will be able to chase them and keep the area clean," he said.

Mr. Hart said the security would stretch all the way to Emancipation Garden, noting that when violent activity occurs, perpetrators usually try to escape through the children's area — which includes a variety of rides and other fun activities — and through the historic landmark, in their efforts to elude law enforcement.

He said when security measures are in place that require security checks before people could come through the children's area and other access points, criminal activity will be deterred because of limited options to escape.

St. Thomas Carnival activities start on April 1 with a Calypso tent, and ends on April 29 with the Adults Parade, fireworks at 9:00 p.m., and Last Lap at the Fort Christian parking lot from 10:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. See full schedule [here](#).

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