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All Herbert Grigg Residents are Said to Have Tested Negative For Covid-19

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Staff Consortium **July 19, 2020**

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The residents of the Herbert Grigg Home for the Aged have tested negative for Covid-19, according to a person familiar with the matter. The Department of Human Services had been calling family members of the seniors who reside at the facility on St. Croix to inform them of possible exposure at the facility and the need to test all the residents, families who spoke with the Consortium said.

D.H.S. issued a statement on Friday evening to the Consortium, stating that all residents at its facilities territory wide — Herbert Grigg on St. Croix and Queen Louise in St. Thomas — were to be tested for the virus. The department further stated that protocols were put in place in March, and that D.H.S. Commissioner Kimberly Causey-Gomez met with family members on March 17.

"The additional exposure to COVID has become greater, with the rising number of positive cases on the island. Therefore, the Department of Human Services is working closely with the Department of Health to provide testing for and monitor all of our Homes for the Aged residents and staff (Herbert Grigg – STX and Queen Louise – STT)," the department said in a statement.

The protocols for assisted living facilities in the territory run by the government are as follows:

- The screening protocol, including temperature checks for all persons attempting to enter the facility will continue.
- The Department of Health's Division of Epidemiology tested employees and residents of the Herbert Grigg Home this past week and is scheduling the same for Queen Louise Home for the Aged
- Modified shift schedules for coverage of the facility has been implemented.
- We will reassess and revise the shift schedules for coverage of the facility when COVID results are received.
- Plans are in place for the HGH facility to be professionally sanitized, including fogging and cleaning of all areas in the nursing and resident rooms.
- Meetings with staff will continue in order to address concerns and reiterate facility protocol and safety precautions outlined by CDC and the Department of Health.
- Employees were reminded of the following pre-cautions mandated by the VI Department of Health and provided to them in mind March. Employees must wear mask for face coverings

In the U.S., deaths of staff and residents at senior-care centers represent at least 40 percent of overall Covid-19 fatalities, according to the Wall Street Journal. The next highest rate is Ireland, with a 62 percent share.

At least 57,000 residents and workers have died from the coronavirus at nursing homes and other long-term care facilities for older adults in the United States, according to a New York Times database. As of July 15, the virus had infected more than 316,000 people at some 14,000 facilities.

According to the Times, Covid-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, is known to be particularly lethal to adults in their 60s and older who have underlying health conditions. And it can spread more easily through congregate facilities, where many people live in a confined environment and workers move from room to room.