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36 New Covid-19 Cases Reported Territory-Wide as Stay-at-Home Order Takes Hold; 4 Patients Said to Be on Ventilator Machines

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The V.I. Department of Health [reported](#) 36 new cases of the novel coronavirus on Monday night, with 26 of those cases being confirmed on St. Thomas, while St. Croix accounted for 10. No new cases were reported on St. John.

Community spread and close contact continue to be the main driver of cases in St. Thomas, with 10 of the latest cases being attributed to community spread, 9 to close contact, 1 travel-related and 6 were under investigation as of Monday.

So far 12,696 people have been tested for the virus in the USVI from both private and public sources, with 11,868 returning negative and 796 positive. Nine people have died from the virus, 5

of which occurred on St. Croix and 4 on St. Thomas.

Governor Albert Bryan, urging residents to follow the new rules established in his recent Stay-at-Home order that calls for non-essential businesses to close, among other guidelines implemented in a bid to curb the virus's rise, revealed during his Monday press briefing that one Covid-19 patient was hospitalized and on a ventilator at the Juan F. Luis Hospital. Three of 7 patients at the Schneider Regional Medical Center were on ventilators as of Monday, according to the governor.

The Consortium questioned Mr. Bryan on the territory's current guidelines on patients considered to be recovered from the virus, and how they are released back into the community. Mr. Bryan said the quarantine time has moved from 14 to 10 days. "That's a new change that wasn't there before," he said. "They're finding out now that the majority of symptoms come on within 3-5 days of you being in contact with a person so we adjusted our testing regimen for that as well."

On the U.S. mainland, many companies are seeking tests for workers before they are allowed to return to work. The Wall Street Journal, citing corporate medical advisers and human resources executives, said regular tests for workers could keep exposure to sick employees to a minimum and boost employees' confidence about coming back to work.

Mr. Bryan said there was nothing preventing private firms in the territory from requiring their employees to be retested before returning to the workforce. However, the recommendation has not been made by the Department of Health and government employees who have tested positive are not required to be retested before returning to their jobs.

D.O.H. said it was tracking 254 active cases as of Monday and listed as recovered 533, up from 525 a day earlier.