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Only 10 Covid-19 Cases Reported Last Week, But Testing Has Dropped

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The V.I. Department of Health reported only 10 cases of the coronavirus from Monday through Saturday of last week, a drop in infections resulting from a number of factors.

Among the factors may be more decisive action at the territory's airports from the Bryan administration; residents' continued adherence to safety protocols, and a drop in testing from the V.I. Department of Health.

According to data provided last week by D.O.H., testing has seen a considerable drop from previous levels, a change Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion has attributed in part to a decrease in test requests.

According to D.O.H. data, 1,060 people were tested for Covid-19 last week — 173 on Monday, 200 Tuesday, 195 on Wednesday, on Thursday 246, on Friday 183 and on Saturday 63. While this means a positivity rate of 1.06 percent last week, which is encouraging, much more testing is needed to know the full impact of the virus on the territory. In [late March](#), the health department said its goal was to begin testing 1,000 people a day.

Ms. Encarnacion suggested in September that the drop in testing was temporary as the department had changed its strategy so that it could test more individuals, and that more tests would be performed in the coming weeks. However, that was weeks ago and a considerable change in testing has yet to be realized.

"We're going out in the public and we're targeting specific populations... We're changing our strategy so that we can actually increase our numbers. And we're also having some of our local labs increase [testing] as well. So hopefully we'll see an increase of testing within the next week or so," said Ms. Encarnacion during a Covid-19 update held Sept 14, when asked why the number of tests had dropped.

As of Saturday there were 42 active cases (23 on St. Croix, 11 on St. Thomas and 8 on St. John), 30 cases were pending and 1,265 people had recovered, according to D.O.H. Twenty individuals have died as a result of the virus in the USVI.