

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Dept. of Health Reports 58 New Cases Between Thursday and Friday; Total Active Infections Climb to 179

Coronavirus / **Published On December 12, 2020 05:48 AM /**

Staff Consortium **December 12, 2020**



The V.I. Dept. of Health [reported](#) 58 new Covid-19 cases for Thursday and Friday, leading to a territory-wide total active caseload of 179 with another 123 test results pending.

St. Croix continues to lead with 85 active cases, followed by St. Thomas with 54 and St. John with 40 active infections, according to D.O.H.

D.O.H.'s latest data update show 20 of the recent infections (not necessarily Thursday's and Friday's data) being transmitted through community spread, with St. Croix accounting for 15 of those cases. Another 31 cases were transmitted through close contact, with St. Croix again leading the numbers with 16, following by St. Thomas with 10 and St. John with 5. Five cases were related to travel, including three on St. Croix and two in St. Thomas.

The V.I. Department of Health has partly blamed the surge on Thanksgiving gatherings the department said went against its recommendations along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's. D.O.H. continues to urge residents to practice safety measures, among them mask-wearing and social distancing, along with hygiene best practices.

Another problem has been the lax Covid-19 guidelines at the territory's airports, which the administration has vowed to address for months but has so far been unsuccessful.

A Consortium reporter experienced a rather weak setup following a recent trip to Puerto Rico. While the reporter was asked to provide a test result, which he did, some passengers of the same flight entering the territory said they had not tested, and were simply allowed to walk out after filling out a document.

Governor Albert Bryan said Monday the administration would address the situation in the coming weeks, including mandating 100 percent testing at the airports, according to Government House.

"Individuals who come to the territory without a negative test will be mandated to be tested at a personal cost," said Mr. Bryan. "Those who refuse to be tested will be fined and subject to a 14-day quarantine." The governor has spoken about these impending restrictions for a while, but rigid implementation has not taken place.

Mr. Bryan said the fine that will be imposed will be significantly more than the cost of getting a Covid-19 test, according to Government House.

"The only delay to this being implemented is the availability of tests and testing, as well as the software changes needed for a smooth transition to this format," he said. "We were successful in joining the new initiative by American Airlines to provide pre-boarding testing and will continue to pursue this with other airline partners."