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## FEMA to Support USVI's Covid-19 Effort by Opening Two Vaccination Centers March 1st

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There will be two Covid-19 vaccination centers opening in the U.S. Virgin Islands at the beginning of next month, Governor Albert Bryan announced during the Government House weekly press briefing on Monday. He was hopeful that the Community Vaccine Centers would help the Virgin Islands achieve its goal of vaccinating 50,000 Virgin Islanders by July.

On St. Croix and St. Thomas, the centers will be on the UVI campuses. In the St. Croix District the center will be located at UVI's Great Hall, and on St. Thomas at UVI's Sports and Fitness Center, which will serve St. Thomas and St. John.

The Centers will be supported by the V.I. Department of Health, FEMA, Department of Defense, VITEMA and the V.I. National Guard.

Chris Allen, deputy federal coordinating officer for FEMA, said, "The March 1st openings of the Community Vaccine Centers on St. Croix and St. Thomas mark one more step in the unified effort between the territory and the federal government to curb the spread of Covid-19."

There will be on-site language translation supported by FEMA through the use of translation phone lines, according to Mr. Allen. And there will be American Sign Language (ASL) virtual translation available as well, also supported by FEMA.

"FEMA has supported the territory with its mission to defeat Covid-19 since the territory confirmed its first positive coronavirus case March 13, 2020," Mr. Allen said, adding, "and we will continue to support the U.S. Virgin Islands before, during and after disasters."

Mr. Allen said the FEMA process is to choose the federal agency best prepared to support a request for assistance following a disaster. In this case it was the Department of Defense, which is in charge of [Operation Warp Speed](#). The U.S. D.O.D. will provide roughly twenty-five troops to support the effort at the vaccination sites.

"The important point is that there is a joint task force consisting of the Virgin Islands Department of Health and the federal response folks that work through this everyday to assure that on March 1 there is mission success," said Mr. Allen.

During the press event, Governor Bryan urged frequent travelers to take the vaccine, pointing to the ease in travel for those whose Covid-19 tests produce antibodies.

The VITEMA hotline for scheduling an appointment is 340-777-8227 (VACS).