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FEMA Provides 126,000 Gloves, 100,000 Procedural Masks, 5,000 Goggles and More to Territory's Vaccination Centers

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Personal protective equipment (PPE) being delivered to the territory's vaccination center in St. Thomas at the UVI Sports and Fitness Center. By. FEMA

A unified effort between the territory and federal government made it possible to deliver the right resources, at the right place, at the right time to stand up two Community Vaccination Centers (CVC) within a month on St. Croix and St. Thomas, said the Federal Emergency Management Agency Wednesday.

FEMA's logistics and operations teams rolled up their sleeves to coordinate with the V.I. Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) and V.I. Department of Health (VIDOH)

to deliver personal protective equipment, medical supplies, partitions, tables, chairs, traffic cones and office equipment to the vaccination centers at the campuses of the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), according to the release.

Resources delivered to the territory to support its Covid-19 response and two vaccination centers includes 126,000 gloves, 100,000 procedural masks, 5,000 goggles and 9,600 adhesive bandages.

FEMA said to build out the territorially-led, federally supported vaccination centers, the facilities had to support the territory's objectives. The goal was a location that can vaccinate 50,000 Virgin Islanders, have space for social distancing, pharmacies to store vaccine and medical supplies and accessible accommodations for persons with disabilities or access and functional needs.

"FEMA Logistics collaborated with VITEMA and the V.I. Department of Health to identify the requirements for each site and to get resources expedited. We had the ability to quickly source for supplies throughout the territory and continental United States to support our efforts. An immediate delivery of supplies from the FEMA Region 2 warehouse and the CDC's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) warehouse gave FEMA the ability to ensure success in opening both vaccination centers in the territory," said Region 2 Incident Management Assistance Team Logistics Section Chief Kevin Cobb Sr.

Agreements were completed with UVI for use of the Great Hall on St. Croix and Sports and Fitness Center on St. Thomas. Resources, such as gloves for clinical staff, had to be shipped to the U.S. Virgin Islands from the continental United States.

"We have been working on plans to open the Community Vaccination Centers and are very pleased to see our efforts come to life. We were happy to partner with UVI because this allowed for us to accommodate more people for vaccinations on their spacious campuses. We are so grateful to collaborate with FEMA, VITEMA, DoD, CDC, and other partners in this major accomplishment," said Department of Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion.

The logistics teams met the challenge and the centers were built out during the last week of February for the intended opening on March 1 providing Virgin Islanders their best shot to defeat COVID-19, getting vaccinated.

"The operation over at the St. Thomas UVI Community Vaccination Center is an example of how the partnership between the territory and FEMA works. We regularly train and practice with our federal and territorial partners as well as the local VOAD community. The result has been a collaborative effort towards combating the virus and accomplishing the mission as directed by DOH Commissioner Justa (Tita) Encarnacion. Additionally, our V.I. National Guard lead serves as the Dual Status Commander to coordinate military forces working within the territory, both active (Title 10) and National Guard (Title 32). These military folks are united in support of this critical mission," said VITEMA Deputy Director of Logistics Stephen DeBlasio Sr.

Deputy Federal Coordinating Officer John Covell added, "the federal government's logistical and clinical support to the territory ensures Virgin Islanders can be vaccinated and take their best shots against the coronavirus. FEMA has supported the territory's COVID-19 response since the territory's first positive case was confirmed in March 2020. We urge Virgin Islanders to be part of a solution and get the facts on COVID-19 and vaccinations."

Virgin Islanders who are eligible could be vaccinated regardless of citizenship status, disability or employer and vaccines are provided free of charge.

Call VITEMA's registration line for an appointment to be vaccinated at 340-777-8227. This line will also accept requests for reasonable accommodations related to the vaccination centers.

Virgin Islanders may also visit VIDOH's COVID-19 Vaccine Scheduling Gateway at <https://www.covid19.usvi.care/vaccines> to book a vaccination appointment.

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