

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Dept. of Health Awarded \$3.1 Million by CDC to Better of Address Underserved and High-Risk Communities Affected by Covid-19

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The V.I. Department of Health announced this week that it has successfully secured a \$3.1 million grant for two years from the Centers for Disease Control Prevention, whose goal is to address Covid-19 health disparities among underserved and high-risk populations.

The grant opportunity became available in April, D.O.H. said. Irving Julien, D.O.H.'s performance improvement manager spearheaded as the lead on the grant, according to the release.

The funding awarded will allow the health department to expand its existing testing sites, provide additional testing to the elderly/bedridden, prison inmates, the disabled, mentally ill and homeless populations, according to the release.

As part of the funding, D.O.H. said it will increase data collection and will procure Covid-19 personal protection equipment for the community, as well as reporting on populations experiencing a disproportionate burden of Covid-19 infections, severe illness, and death in an effort to guide its response.

Funding will also be used to expand the department's current infrastructure by hiring additional staff to include psychiatrists, outreach health workers, program managers and counselors.

The USVI was one of 107 applicants to be awarded, D.O.H. said.