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BVI Announces Nighttime Curfew, Shuts Down Entertainment Venues and Gyms, Halts In-Person Learning as Covid Cases Skyrocket in British Territory

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Roadtown, Tortola, BVI. By. VI CONSORTIUM

The government of the British Virgin Islands on Tuesday announced that it would reimplement its nightly Covid-induced curfew, shut down bars, clubs and other entertainment venues and gyms, and halt in-person learning at private and public facilities as positive cases of Covid-19 in the British territory have skyrocketed to 480.

In a statement [published Tuesday](#), BVI Health Minister Carvin Malone laid out an extensive set of restrictions he said was aimed at containing the virus's spread.

"As of July 5th, I am sadly reporting that there exist 480 reported active Covid-19 cases in the British Virgin Islands. This total includes a number of persons at some of our resident and treatment facilities. At best, this situation is troubling and all measures must and will be taken to arrest and stop this upsurge," he said.

Mr. Carvin added, "I continue to highlight the fact that Covid-19 is not going anywhere. We are not out of the woods yet. We must continue to make executive decision while weighing the balance of managing lives and enhancing livelihoods."

The government implemented the following restrictions as a result of the surge:

- Cabinet decided that all private and public schools (including pre-schools), child care centers, summer programs and extra-curricular activities are mandated to cease in-person activities with effect from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 for 14 days in the first instance, and subject to a review by the Cabinet after seven (7) days; provided that all external/regional examinations may continue to be administered at public and private schools with the approval by the Ministry of Education, in consultation the Chief Environmental Health Officer and the Chief Medical Officer.
- In addition, Cabinet decided that, except with the approval of the Minister for Health and Social Development, all businesses and/or workplaces be required to restrict numbers to a limit of up to 65 persons at a time, per location, subject to adequate social distancing protocols being maintained in accordance with guidance from the Chief Environmental Health Officer, with effect from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 for a period of 14 days in the first instance.
- Cabinet also decided that social gatherings, including faith-based organizations, weddings and funerals, should be limited to 25 persons at a time for a period of 14 days effective 6th July, 2021, and subject to a review by the Cabinet after seven (7) days; and noted that SI No. 61 of 2021 - Public Health (COVID-19 Control and Suppression Measures) (No. 3) (Amendment) (No. 5) Order, 2021 be amended accordingly;
- Cabinet further decided that, except with the approval of the Minister for Health and Social Development, all ferries be required to restrict numbers to a limit of up to 65 persons at a time, subject to adequate social distancing protocols being maintained in accordance with guidance from the Chief Environmental Health Officer, with effect from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 for a period of 14 days in the first instance;
- Cabinet also decided that hairdressers, barbers, gyms, bars, clubs and entertainment establishments be closed; and that restaurants, for in-house dining, be limited to one (1) person per 36 square feet to a maximum occupancy of 25 persons, all inclusive of staff and patrons, with effect from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 for a period of 14 days in the first instance.
- In addition, Cabinet decided to test for Covid-19 at least once per fortnight, or as advised by the Chief Medical Officer, the employees of the following organizations: police, customs, immigration, prison, sea and airport authorities, and residential facilities as outlined in item c. and other high vulnerability settings during high incidences of the disease in the Territory, subject to contrary advice from the Attorney General;
- Cabinet further decided that, in addition to existing measures, all vaccinated persons be subject to a rapid test upon arrival, effective 12th July, 2021, at a fee of \$50.00;
- Cabinet also decided that Cabinet advise the National Security Council to instruct the Attorney General to draft a new curfew order to implement a nighttime curfew from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. for a period of 14 days in the first instance; and these new measures are expected to be [published] for full implementation shortly.

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