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Bryan Orders More Help to JFL as Hospital Reports Being at 'All-Time High' With Covid Patients; No New Restrictions Yet; Governor Says Surge 'Very Unnecessary'

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Governor Albert Bryan told the Consortium Sunday his administration has ordered that more health care staff be provided to the Juan F. Luis Hospital as the medical facility — already in severe need of support and operating in a building [soon to be abandoned](#) — reported Sunday being at an "all-time high" with Covid-19 patients.

JFL said it had eighteen ill individuals receiving care as of Sunday. The hospital itself has published [help wanted opportunities](#) as it struggles to provide care with the rising number of patients. The government of the Virgin Islands, through the V.I. Dept. of Health, [has a contract](#)

[with Pafford Medical Services](#), which already has many employees in the territory supplementing the USVI's strained healthcare infrastructure. The company says it offers all forms of pre and post hospital healthcare, "ranging from basic life support response to critical ground and air response."

"We have ordered more help for JFL in terms of manpower," Mr. Bryan said. The governor, well aware of the rising Covid numbers in the territory caused by the Delta variant, said the situation could have been prevented if more people were vaccinated. "The numbers are very concerning and very unnecessary," he said. "It's a constant reminder that getting vaccinated is our lifeline to normalcy."

He then pleaded with the community on behalf of Virgin Islanders on the frontlines: "Our healthcare workers need your help, get vaccinated," he said.

Even with the rising numbers, however, Mr. Bryan said no new restrictions would be announced today, though this thinking may change following a Monday morning meeting to discuss the current situation. Mr. Bryan had said cases would need to pass "300 or more" before new lockdowns are considered.

JFL on Sunday described the current situation at the hospital as "critical," suggesting an unstable environment not within normal limits. The hospital would not be the first in this position. A few miles away in the British Virgin Islands, hospital employees [sought counseling](#) after being overwhelmed by record hospitalizations and deaths.

"Right now, the Gov. Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center is seeing an all-time high of COVID-19 hospitalizations. This latest surge and outbreak has led to a truly critical moment for our JFL family," read the statement posted Sunday on Facebook. "Today, our number of COVID-positive patients is 18 — prior to July 2021, our highest number was 8. None of these hospitalized COVID-19 positive patients is fully vaccinated."

The hospital encouraged Virgin Islanders to get vaccinated, stating, "the human cost of COVID-19 is real... Our hard-working health care workers are your family, friends and neighbors, please care for them, pray for them, and protect them."

According to the V.I. Dept. of Health, as of Saturday there were 254 active Covid cases in the territory, 161 on St. Thomas, ninety on St. Croix, and three on St. John. The territory has lost 37 Virgin Islanders to Covid-related causes, and [Friday's death announcement](#) brought to five the number of Covid deaths in the USVI in two weeks.