

The Virgin Islands Consortium

For the First Time Since the Start of the Pandemic, the USVI Has Topped 400 Active Covid-19 Cases

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The V.I. Dept. of Health on Friday reported 401 active Covid-19 cases territory-wide, marking the first time the USVI has seen such a high number of reported active infections since the start of the pandemic. The data provided even more evidence of what local health officials have already confirmed is the Delta variant's rapid spread in the territory.

According to [D.O.H. data](#), St. Thomas accounted for most of the active infections at 255, followed by St. Croix with 135 and St. John with 11.

Governor Albert Bryan has consistently encouraged residents to follow safety guidelines, and he continues to push vaccination as the safest way to prevent severe illness and

death. On Monday, the governor said beginning Sept. 9, government employees who are not vaccinated [will have to test weekly](#), a move aimed at both mitigating spread and encouraging vaccinations.

The high level of infection in St. Thomas is affecting a number of government operations, with at least four government offices [announcing closures](#) because of either Covid-19 exposure or positive cases.

Less than two weeks ago, 53.6 percent, or 47,350 people had taken at least one dose of a Covid-19 vaccine in the territory, while 37,350 were fully vaccinated, or 44.7 percent. The administration has said about 6 percent are individuals who during the early days of vaccine availability traveled to the USVI to get vaccinated, so when accounting for those individuals, the territory's true vaccination rate stood at 47.6 percent of the eligible population less than two weeks ago, [among the lowest in the nation](#).

As the cases continue to rise, residents across the territory, including those in the medical field in both the St. Croix and St. Thomas-St. John Districts, have taken to the streets protesting vaccine mandate policies implemented by the territory's hospitals and the University of the Virgin Islands.

Earlier this month, Mr. Bryan unloaded on vaccine doubters and conspiracy theorists, highlighting the governor's frustration with the vaccine hesitancy that has taken hold in the territory.

Said the governor: "The number one killer in the Virgin Islands is hypertension, heart disease and diabetes, and people [eating] macaroni and cheese, stuffing, seasoned rice, every single day. Souse and all of these other stuff.

"They're putting on clothes washed in chemicals that will poison your body. They're spraying dyes and all kinds of things in their hair. They're going to nail shops where they're filing down and inhaling all kinds of toxins every single day, and painting themselves and their hair and their fingers with all kinds of things that contaminate your body.

"They're putting phones to their heads full of radiation and all kinds of other things that are messing with their system. And every day and night they're going to bars and places and drinking sodas and all kinds of alcohol and other kinds of toxins in their body that they never know where it come from.

"They're eating at fast food restaurants, they don't know how it's made, what it's made from, or what kinds of plastic are in it, and you're going to tell me about vaccines? Let's get real.

"If the government had wanted to poison you and kill you they could have done so a lot faster, because all they had to do is put it in an app.

"I mean all of the arguments that I've listened to, vaccines have a long history. In 2021 we don't need to be going through the Black Plague of the dark ages because people don't want to take the medicine. And so many places in the world people wish they could have this medicine in order to survive.

"Bottomline, if you get sick, you're going to be begging for the monoclonal antibodies which is the same technology that we use in the vaccine."

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