

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Vaccination in USVI Sees Sharp Increase, Governor Says; No New Restrictions as Cases Drop Below 400

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Vaccination against Covid-19 saw a sharp increase last week, Governor Albert Bryan has told the Consortium, a sign that the Delta variant-induced surge in active infections and rising Covid-related deaths in the territory are pushing Virgin Islanders to get vaccinated against the virus.

According to the governor, who spoke with the Consortium Sunday, over 1,200 Virgin Islanders got vaccinated against Covid-19 last week. "It looks like we're going to keep that trend for a while," he said.

Mr. Bryan said that as of Saturday there were forty hospitalizations split between the Schneider Regional Medical Center and the Juan F. Luis Hospital. He said eight individuals were on ventilators.

According to the V.I. Dept. of Health, [as of Saturday](#) there were 370 active Covid-19 cases, 238 on St. Thomas, 123 on St. Croix and 10 on St. John. To date, D.O.H. [has recorded 41 deaths](#) related to the virus. Last week, Schneider Regional Medical Center CEO, Dr. Luis Amaro, [announced](#) that a hospital employee passed from Covid-related causes.

Mr. Bryan said while people may have varying opinions on restrictions, some level of action must be taken to mitigate the virus's spread. However, the governor suggested he would not completely shutdown the territory.

"Even if we shut down everybody, the moment we open back up it's going right back up quick, so hopefully [the Delta variant] will run through its course," he said. "We're watching what's going to happen this week."

Mr. Bryan said the USVI in recent times has been experiencing a daily positivity rate of 8-10 percent, "which is bad."

Relative to restrictions, don't expect any during Mr. Bryan's press briefing today. He said the recently announced changes to the executive order [took effect on August 6](#), "so we got to wait to see what happens and then we should get some good recoveries this week, which should balance us out."

The governor said if by Wednesday the number of active cases climb higher, more changes will be made, though he did not say what they would be. "We're going to make sure we're keeping our eye on it," he said.