

Image not found or type unknown

## With Passengers Still Facing Issues, V.I. Government to Remind Airlines of Travel Portal Discontinuation

Travel / **Published On June 06, 2022 05:48 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **June 06, 2022**

Image not found or type unknown



Some people traveling to the U.S. Virgin Islands as of last week were still facing issues from airlines that continue to demand proof of registration on the USVI Travel Portal, though the requirement was [discontinued on June 1](#).

Travelers have been reaching out to the Consortium and also the V.I. Dept. of Tourism about the issue. Several travelers on Spirit Airlines said last week that they missed their flight because the airline would not allow them through without proof of Travel Portal registration and a result showing a green bar code. Some American Airlines passengers have also complained about the issue.

Governor Albert Bryan told the Consortium Sunday that he would reach out to Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte, who reported back to the governor that the department had been fielding complaints and would issue a second notice to airlines, according to Mr. Bryan.

A visit to the USVI Travel Portal as of Monday shows an alert that reads, "All domestic travelers and international travelers are no longer required to complete the USVI Travel Screening Portal or present an approved green QR code to travel to the USVI. Please refer to CDC.gov to stay up to date on the current international travel requirements for the United States."

The alert also advises international travelers to the territory that they must show proof of a negative Covid-19 test taken within 24 hours before being allowed into the USVI.

The Bryan administration discontinued travel portal registration on June 1, a significant move that ended a requirement that many had found vexing, though it was an important tool in the administration's fight against the Coronavirus.

The decision to discontinue the portal keeps in line with comments the governor made early March when Mr. Bryan lifted the indoor mask mandate. [At the time](#), he told the Consortium that the portal would remain in place until June.

Ending the travel portal requirement further realizes the territory's new [Covid endemic status](#), an announcement made just under a month ago. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a disease is endemic when it is a constant presence in a population, follow predictable patterns and occur at an expected, baseline level. "To put it another way, an endemic disease is consistently present, but it spreads at predictable rates that can be managed by communities," said the CDC.

The seasonal Influenza, for example, is an endemic disease in the United States. Malaria is an endemic in many parts of the world, with 229 million cases reported 2019.

Dept. of Health Infectious Disease Specialist, Dr. Tai Hunte-Cesar, said the territory is "entering into a state of endemicity where Covid-19 will continuously be prevalent throughout the territory and Covid levels will rise depending on the level of activity and variants circulating among the community."

"Our current positivity rate is 15 percent. However, we are seeing a lower level of sickness in our hospitalized patients," Dr. Hunte-Cesar said. "We began our transition out of the pandemic into endemicity with the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions. So, let's continue to work together and keep each other safe by doing our part."

Yet while the administration has announced the transition to endemic Covid status, the CDC hasn't made this determination. In its latest update regarding endemic diseases, the agency said that when Covid is finally declared an endemic, this may "translate to continued mask wearing in places like public transportation, indoor settings, and offices."

Additionally, the CDC stated, "With good community efforts, high vaccination rates, and improved treatments, Covid-19 can potentially become a predictable disease that communities can cope with, much as they do the seasonal flu."

"For now, vaccination efforts remain a key step in ending the pandemic and transitioning to an endemic."

As of Friday there were 627 active Covid-19 cases territory-wide, including 445 on St. Croix, 139 on St. Thomas, and 43 on St. John, [according to the health department](#). The territory's positivity rate stood at 11.93 percent.

© Viconsortium 2024