

Mask No Longer a Requirement on Election Day Following Last-Minute Rule Change

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Kayra Williams **November 04, 2022**

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Electors will not need to wear a mask when voting on Nov. 8 following a last-minute instruction issued by V.I. Board of Elections Chairman, Raymond Williams during a board meeting Friday.

Covid-19 safety protocols, specifically mask-wearing, was among the topics discussed at Friday's meeting. Mr. Williams stated that V.I. law does not require voters to wear masks and he asked officials to refrain from refusing anyone who did not wish to wear one from voting.

“I know we want to be safe, but whether we can supply or not, whether someone refuses, we cannot refuse them from coming in to vote,” he said. “I love how our election officials do their job, but if somebody does not want to wear a mask, we cannot deny them from coming in.”

On Saturday, training for election officials will continue on St. Croix. Also on Saturday, the certification of election officials will occur. Mr. Williams urged everyone to "participate, go out, and be vigilant."

The deployment of equipment to voting centers will begin on Sunday, November 6 and will continue through Monday. Security services will be on hand to receive the equipment at the respective voting locations. Election officials are also expected to be present.

Mr. Williams urged members and other officials to pay special attention to the equipment certification process to avoid "any potential issues that may come up" on election day.

"Please visit those centers when the equipment is delivered to ensure that the seals are in tact," he said. "Once we turn it over, we want to make sure we can testify that this is the scenario... if a seal is broken, contact the deputies or supervisor, let someone know. We want to make sure we deal with these issues before we open the polls on Tuesday."

Mr. Williams reminded members that the judges were the "final arbiter on decisions at the voting centers."

"You see something wrong... tell them, but don't dictate to them how they must do things. That is not our role, that is not our objective. The judge is the person that is in charge," he said.

The board chair maintained that no paper copy of results would be issued until the end of the night when all voting centers had reported in.

Although all voting centers will have spare equipment which covers eventualities, Mr. Williams called for a backup DS200 voting machine to be made available at the election offices in the event there were issues in reading a thumb drive, "so that we can use it to re-upload the information."

The V.I. Consortium will be hosting our live coverage of election night results on our Facebook platform and website, beginning at 7:00 p.m. It will be hosted by VIC Publisher Ernice Gilbert, along with some guests.

All voting centers open at 7:00 am on voting day. Election day voting centers are as follows:

St. Croix

- D.C. Canegata Recreation Center
- St. Dunstan's Episcopal School Auditorium
- St. Croix Central High School Modular Gymnasium
- St. Croix Educational Complex Gymnasium
- Arthur a. Richards K-8th School Modular Cafeteria

St. Thomas

- University of the Virgin Islands Sports & Fitness Center
- Charlotte Amalie High School Gymnasium
- Tutu Park Mall (Former Scotia Bank Location)
- Ivanna Eudora Kean High School Cafeteria

St. John

- Julius Sprauve Elementary School Cafeteria
- Calabash Boom Community Center

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