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## Dept. of Health Urging Caution as Covid Cases Rise, Residents Encouraged to Get Vaccinated

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The V.I. Dept. of Health is calling on the Virgin Islands public to continue practicing Covid safety measures as active cases in the territory have been on an upward trend.

D.O.H. said on Wednesday that "though increases in numbers is expected based on national trends, Commissioner Encarnacion wishes to reinforce the importance of the critical messages and overarching requirements provided to the public during the pandemic."

As of Wednesday there were 89 active cases territory-wide: 57 on St. Croix and 32 on St. Thomas. St. John had no active cases, according to [latest data provided by D.O.H.](#) The seven-day positivity rate stood at 7.49 percent.

The latest numbers represent a doubling of cases when compared to [last week's territory-wide total of 44 active infections](#).

“As our numbers are rising. I urge residents and visitors to once again follow the precautionary measures by practicing social distancing around persons with whom you do not reside, wearing a mask in crowded public areas, washing your hands often with soap and warm water, and by cleaning frequently used areas thoroughly," Dept. of Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion said. "Remember, wearing a mask is not mandatory, but it can keep you safe if you are unsure of your environment."

The department also reminded Virgin Islanders that it is especially important to get vaccinated now as the monoclonal antibody is no longer authorized for use due to its lack of efficacy in the treatment of the newest variants. The bivalent vaccines remain the best way to prevent severe disease and hospitalization, D.O.H. said.

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