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Dept. of Health Confirms 38 Covid Deaths and 63 Percent Vaccination in 2022

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The V.I. Department of Health, Epidemiology Division (VIDOH-EPI), has released its 2022 Annual Report, highlighting that a total of 38 fatalities were linked to Covid-19 during the year. The figures were drawn from a total of 230,702 tests completed across the USVI, with the division detecting 13,675 Covid-19 cases.

The report highlights the VIDOH-EPI's ongoing role as the leader in the USVI's Covid-19 response efforts for 2022. It points to the Covid-19 hotline as a key element of this response, serving as an accessible resource for public inquiries about Covid-19 testing, vaccinations, and access to medical countermeasures. The hotline also handled calls from residents regarding the Mpox outbreak in the USVI.

A breakdown of the 2022 Covid-19 cases and fatalities shows that St. Thomas and Water Island had the highest number of fatalities, with 23 deaths and 5,565 confirmed cases. St. Croix reported 15 fatalities and 7,528 cases, while St. John recorded 585 cases but no fatalities.

In an effort to curb the spread of the virus, the VIDOH-EPI launched more than 10 testing events in response to Covid-19 outbreaks in congregate living settings. It also facilitated two rounds of mass testing events for students and staff across both school districts in collaboration with the V.I. Department of Education. This effort was to ensure a safe return to in-person learning, completing 29,261 tests of which 855 tests returned a positive result. Those identified with the virus were treated and isolated. Additionally, over 17,000 Covid-19 home testing kits were distributed to families of students and school staff as a supplement to in-school testing provided by VIDOH-EPI-trained staff at CLIA-certified school testing sites.

Another aspect of the report focused on the updated Covid-19 vaccine coverage estimates. After adjusting for a large population decline over a decade, the vaccine coverage was found to be 12 percentage points higher using the 2020 population count compared to the 2010 count, which showed [a drastic drop in population](#) growth. The coverage was estimated at 63 percent as of November 2022, a significant increase from the earlier estimate of 51 percent.