

Health Dept. Says Over 1,700 Doses of Pfizer Vaccine Unusable Following Temperature Excursion; 10,000 Stimulus Checks Going Out This Week

[Pdf](#) Published On May 18, 2021 08:45 AM

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Dr. Esther Ellis, the V.I. Dept. of Health's territorial epidemiologist announced Monday during the Bryan administration's press briefing that about 1,750 doses of the Pfizer vaccines were recently deemed unusable following a temperature excursion incident, an estimated \$34,000 loss.

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Dr. Ellis said D.O.H. immediately placed a new order and that there were no interruption of services. "Contingency plans are in place to avoid this type of issue in the future," she added.

The spoiled doses were stored on St. Thomas at the University of the Virgin Islands.

According to the Wall Street Journal, the Food and Drug Administration in February announced that Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine can be stored at standard freezing temperatures for up to two weeks, a development WSJ said should expand access to the shot in rural and low-income regions around the world that lack specialized equipment.

Pfizer and BioNTech a week before the FDA's announcement had asked U.S. regulators to allow their vaccine to be stored and transported [at temperatures consistent with standard freezing](#), around minus 20 degrees Celsius (or minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit), after successful internal stability testing, WSJ said.

After the state of Missouri had to discard a large amount of vaccines, [ABC News](#) stated that the cost of a Pfizer dose is \$19.50, though it is ultimately paid for by the federal government. This would mean the 1,750 unusable doses cost approximately \$34,125.

\$1,400 Stimulus Checks Distribution

Governor Albert Bryan on Monday said the government was on track to disburse another 10,000 \$1,400 stimulus payments to eligible Virgin Islands from the American Rescue Plan this week. The administration was also on track to release all the \$1,400 payments this month, he said.

Mr. Bryan also reminded Virgin Islanders that May 17 was tax day in the United States.

The Bureau of Revenue hotline for stimulus and tax refund assistance is 340-714-9325.

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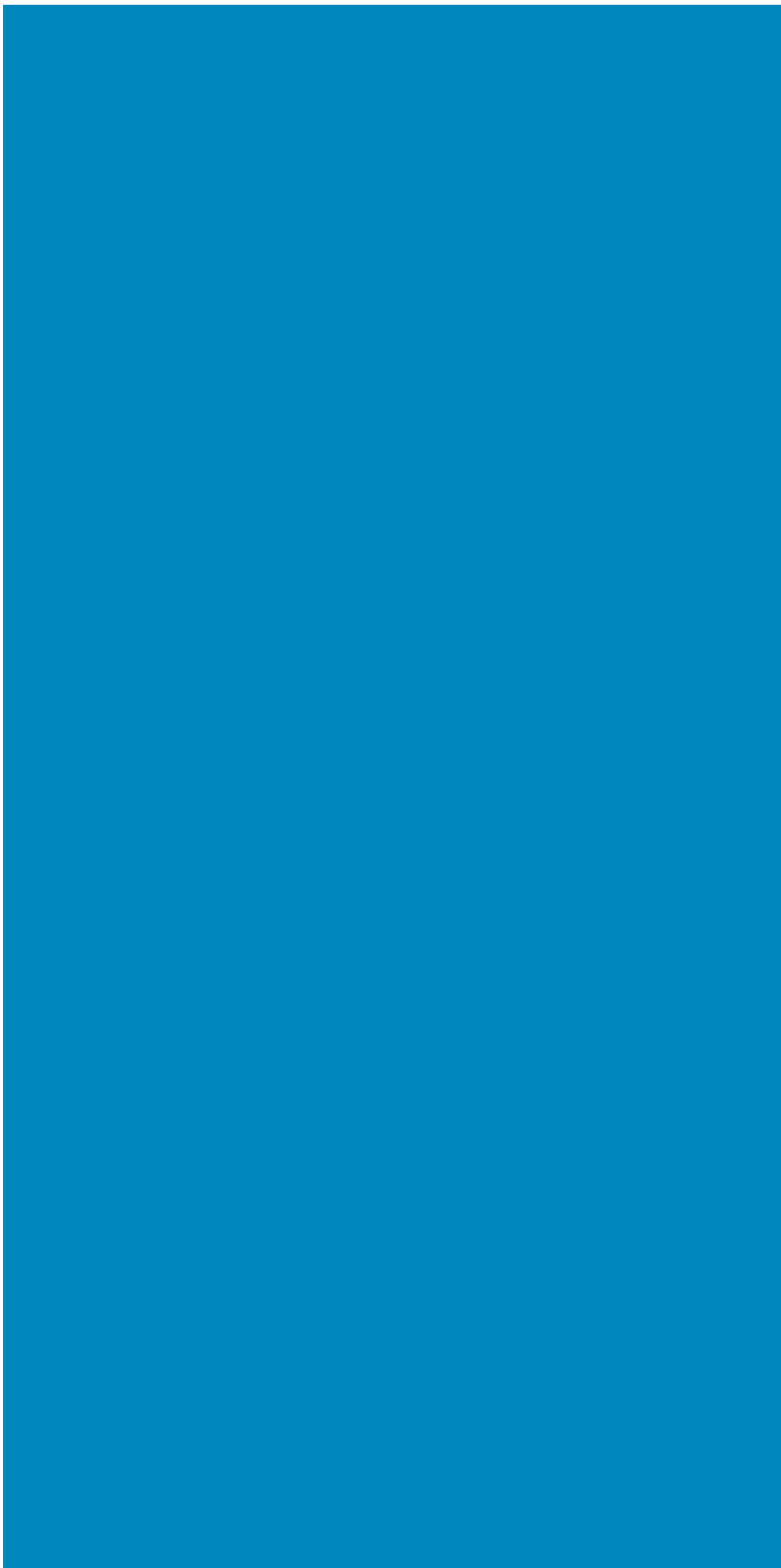


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