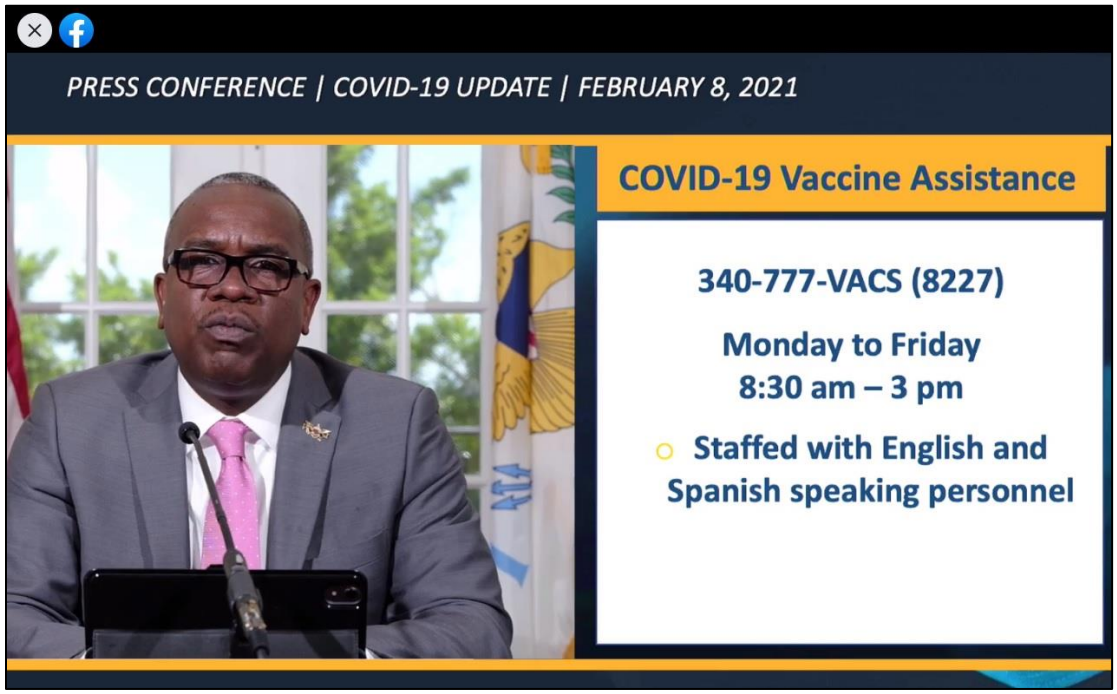
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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Governor Bryan Announces Distribution Of 10,000 Stimulus Checks to Residents

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — During the Government House weekly press briefing on Monday, February 8, 2021, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. said that 10,000 stimulus checks for a total of $9.5 million have been printed and put in the mail to go out to Virgin Islanders.

Governor Bryan also announced that the Bureau of Internal Revenue has established a hotline – 340-714-9325 – for residents who have questions about their stimulus and tax refund payments.

“We anticipate issuing more payments, so if you are an eligible tax filer and have not filed your 2019 income tax return or 2019 form 1040, you need do so now or before the March 15 cutoff,” Governor Bryan said. “As a reminder again for those Social Security recipients who do not have a filing requirement, there is no need to file a return. The Bureau will utilize the information, which was received from the IRS and used to determine eligibility for the first stimulus payments, to issue your second stimulus payment.”

The Governor also spoke about the success of the COVID-19 vaccination hotline at 340-777-VACS (8227) that the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) has established for people who are eligible to make an appointment with a provider to get vaccinated. The hotline is open from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., and it is staffed by English and Spanish speakers. Residents who call outside of the hours of operation should leave their name and a call-back number.

"Since we have deployed the hotline last week, we received 600 requests for COVID-19 vaccine appointments – 540 by phone and 60 through the website," Governor Bryan said. "Roughly, 41 percent of the calls received are from seniors age 65 or older."

Pop-Up testing sites
This week, pop-up testing sites will be at the following locations:

- **St. Thomas Home Depot** on Tuesday, February 9 from 1 to 3 p.m.
- **Canegata Rec Center** on St. Croix on Tuesdays – February 9, 16 and 23 – from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **The V.I. Port Authority Gravel Yard** on St. John on Wednesday, February 10, from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- **The Fort Christian parking lot** on St. Thomas on Thursday, February 11, from 1 to 3 p.m.
- **Canegata Rec Center** on St. Croix on Thursdays **–** February 11,18 and 25 – from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Department of Health Medical Director Dr. Tai Hunte-Ceasar said that since December 16 Health has administered 12,094 vaccinations with 2,967 second doses.

"The Johnson & Johnson one-dose vaccine was submitted for an Emergency Use Authorization on February 6 and is being reviewed by the FDA for this approval," Dr. Hunte-Ceasar said. "Once approved, we will have three available vaccines, which will allow us to provide vaccine access to all eligible residents. We are preparing to meet the requirement to vaccinate 50,000 individuals in the Territory by July 1, per the guidance set forth by Governor Bryan."

Dr. Hunte-Ceasar also said that vaccine tourism is a major concern across the country.

"We are committed to ensuring that 100 percent of residents are offered the opportunity to be vaccinated and continue to work with vaccinating providers to discourage trips to the Territory solely for the purpose of immunization," she said.

Anyone who thinks they may have contracted COVID-19 can call the Epidemiology hotline at 340-712-6299 or 340-776-1519. For more information, visit covid19usvi.com.

Unemployment

- As of January 31, the Virgin Islands Department of Labor (VIDOL) has issued 52,908 unemployment insurance checks totaling $43,520,456 to residents impacted by COVID-19 job losses.
- The department also has issued an additional 29,348 Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation checks totaling $50,072,340.
- VIDOL has issued 7,888 Pandemic Unemployment Assistance checks to self-employed Virgin Islanders totaling $13,127,339 and $6,212,138 in Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation.
- Under the newly administered Lost Wages Assistance Program, VIDOL has issued 3,548 checks totaling $2,994,148.

COVID-19 cases

- The Territory's weekly positivity rate is 2.3 percent.
- Currently tracking 71 active cases.
- 43,160 individuals tested to date (more than 40% of the population).
- 40,590 of those tests were negative.
- 2,466 tests came back positive.
- 2,371 people tested since March have recovered.
- 24 fatalities to date.
- One COVID-19 patient is hospitalized at Juan F. Luis Hospital on St. Croix.
- Four COVID-19 patients are hospitalized at Schneider Regional Medical Center on St. Thomas.

The Bryan/Roach Administration continues to be committed to transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in government and ensuring that the disaster recovery is completed as quickly as possible.

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