

DOH Urges Caution as COVID-19 Cases Edge Up in Virgin Islands

The V.I. Department of Health is urging caution after a slight increase in COVID-19 cases, reminding residents to isolate if positive, follow guidelines on symptoms and recovery, and take extra steps such as masking and hygiene to protect the vulnerable.

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The V.I. Department of Health is reminding residents to remain cautious after observing a slight uptick in Covid-19 cases locally, a trend that mirrors what is being seen on the U.S. mainland.

Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion on Thursday afternoon noted the continuing risk. “We want to remind everyone that Covid-19 remains a concern in our community,” she said. “It is especially important that we protect our most vulnerable, including the elderly and those who are

immunocompromised. Simple actions — such as staying at home when sick, practicing good hand hygiene, and wearing a mask when appropriate — can help prevent the spread of illness.”

DOH outlined its current Covid-19 guidance. Individuals who test positive should isolate. They may resume regular activities once symptoms improve and they are fever-free for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication.

Isolation means not reporting to work and staying away from healthy household members, particularly young children and those who are immunocompromised.

A full five-day isolation is not mandatory. Depending on the severity of symptoms, some people may need to isolate longer, while those with milder cases may return to activities sooner. After resuming normal routines, precautions are recommended for the next five days, including good hand hygiene, mask use, limiting close contact, and improving indoor ventilation.

If symptoms return after activities are resumed, individuals should return to isolation until they are fever-free for 24 hours without medication and their condition improves.

“Following these additional guidelines is especially important because individuals may still be able to spread the virus even if they are feeling better,” Encarnacion said. “Some people such as individuals with immunocompromising conditions, can spread the virus for a longer period of time.”

- Guidance does not differ between vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.
- There is no quarantine requirement for close contacts.
- Testing is not recommended for people without symptoms.

For more information, residents are encouraged to visit the Department of Health website at <http://www.doh.vi.gov>.