



**GOVERNMENT OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES**

VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER No. 2020-001

WHEREAS, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory illness that can spread among humans through respiratory transmission and presents itself with symptoms similar to those of influenza; and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States has declared a National Disaster related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, individuals in the Territory of the Virgin Islands have been pre-emptively isolated and tested for COVID-19, and the CDC currently recommends mitigation measures in communities with potential COVID-19 cases, including staying at home when sick, keeping away from others who are sick and staying at home when a household member is sick with respiratory disease symptoms or if instructed to do so by public health officials or a health care provider; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and appropriate to take action to ensure that COVID-19 remains controlled and that residents and visitors in the U.S. Virgin Islands remain safe and secure; and

WHEREAS, The Governor of the Virgin Islands, Albert Bryan, Jr. on March 13, 2020, declared a State of Emergency in the Virgin Islands due to COVID-19 and appointed the Commissioner of Health as the incident commander and the Department of Health as the lead agency in the territorial response to the pandemic;

WHEREAS, the Governor of the United States Virgin Islands, in order to protect the lives and property of the residents of the Territory may activate all necessary and possible territorial resources under the executive branch, other agencies, instrumentalities, and partners to complete the preparation necessary to protect life and property;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to impose guidelines and restrictions to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the Territory from the potentially dangerous effects of the COVID-19 – Coronavirus Pandemic;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Justa E. Encarnacion, Commissioner of Health of the United States Virgin Islands, by virtue of the authority granted to me by Title 19, Section 2 of the Virgin Islands Code and Title 19, Section 001-000 of the Virgin Islands Rules and Regulations do hereby **ORDER** as follows:

Issued and Effective on: June 1, 2020

The Government of the US Virgin Islands (the Government) takes seriously its mission to protect the lives and health of residents, visitors, and business owners and employees in the COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency. Because there is a higher risk of transmission of the COVID

virus in the enclosed space of a restaurant, bar, and nightclub where patrons will have to remove their facial coverings to eat and drink, heightened precautions are necessary. To that end, the Government has developed guidance that may appear drastic in certain instances, but has been developed and deployed to avoid transmission of a virus that has no cure and to achieve the goal of protecting everyone's health and life. **THIS IS A SERIOUS PUBLIC HEALTH MATTER.**

Guidance for Restaurants

The Virgin Islands Department of Health (VI DOH) recommends strict adherence to guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration ([FDA](#)), as well as the Universal Guidelines for All Businesses. Additionally, the Department recommends restaurants put into place an assortment of policies, including measures to address employee and consumer protection, and business process adaptations.

Please Note: This Order is issued pursuant to regulatory authority as to what will be required of all parties doing business as Restaurants, Bars, and Nightclubs. And what can and will be enforced by Enforcement Officers. There are certain advisories for Suggested Better Business Practices included; these are not regulatory or intended to be enforced by Enforcement Officers. We urge reference to and use of the reference sources listed at the bottom of the Guidance for general business practice guidance.

General Business Guidance

Businesses shall post Guidance for Restaurants, Bars, and Nightclubs (as updated) in prominent place in business establishment, including “No mask/ No service “ signage.

Social Distance Measures

Event centers and banquet halls must comply with mass gathering mandates of less than 50 people or 50 percent of the occupancy capacity (whichever is less).

Measures for restaurants

- *Effective June 22, 2020 the use of disposable dishes, utensils, napkins, and drink containers, is required if any are used (gloves should be used by staff while setting up and breaking down table settings). Patrons may bring, and leave with, their own drink containers or utensils. Masks are to be worn unless eating or drinking.**

Additional Guidance for Bars

***Effective June 22, 2020 disposable drink containers are to be used. This includes cups, bottles, cans, etc. Patrons may bring, and leave with, their own drink container. Masks are to be worn unless eating or drinking.**

- - **Allowance of live music is effective June 8, 2020 but must cease at midnight**
 - **Bars are to be closed at midnight**
 - **Last call for alcoholic beverages is 11pm**
 - **No live bands or DJs are allowed in open public areas.**

- o **Nightclubs are closed until further notice.**

In accordance with Title 3, Section 418(5) & (6) and Title 23, Section 1033(b) of the Virgin Islands Code, the Incident Commander is to take all actions necessary to protect the public health.

The Governor has directed all agencies under the direction of the Governor to fully cooperate with the V.I. Department of Health, and any representative thereof in furtherance of this Order. All agencies not under the direction of the Governor are requested to provide such assistance as is required. All local resources available are designated as being available for the enforcement of this Order.

I SO ORDER, in Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, this the day of July, A.D., 2020.



JUSTA E. ENCARNACION, RN, BSN, MBA/ HCM
Commissioner/Territorial Health Official