



# BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS

Government of the Virgin Islands

*"Security, Custody, Control"*

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## **IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: August 11, 2020

### **Staff and Inmates at the St. Thomas Jail Test Positive for COVID-19**

St. Thomas, USVI – At approximately 10:30 p.m. Sunday, August 9, 2020, the Bureau of Corrections ("BOC") learned that a detainee at the Alexander A. Farrelly Criminal Complex on St. Thomas (the "St. Thomas Jail") tested positive for the novel coronavirus (a/k/a/ "COVID-19). This was the first confirmed case of COVID-19 infection at any BOC facility.

In response, and in accordance with CDC guidelines, the Bureau requested that the V.I. Department of Health ("DOH") immediately conduct COVID-19 testing of all staff and inmates at the St. Thomas Jail. Today, BOC learned that in addition to the detainee who tested positive on Sunday, a total of 19 other persons at the St. Thomas Jail have tested positive for the coronavirus, including 3 BOC staff. BOC has notified the COVID-19 positive inmates and staff of their status.

For the protection of its staff, their families, and inmates, BOC has mandated that all staff at the St. Thomas Jail who have not been tested for COVID-19 do so within the next 48 hours. DOH will be performing this testing in coordination with BOC.

**There have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection at the John A. Bell Adult Correctional Facility on St. Croix ("Golden Grove");** therefore, the CDC and DOH guidelines do not require mandatory testing of staff and inmates at Golden Grove. Nevertheless, BOC is closely monitoring inmates and staff at Golden Grove for any symptoms.

BOC has placed the St. Thomas Jail on lockdown, and DOH has imposed a public health quarantine at the facility. No new inmates/detainees will be accepted at the facility, and none will be released until all COVID-19 cases at the facility have been cleared.

**BOC's number one priority is the health and safety of its staff, their families, and its inmates.** We are working closely with the CDC representative on the ground and with DOH to minimize the risk of coronavirus infection at any BOC facility.

BOC has been proactive in following CDC and DOH guidelines since the pandemic began. Those efforts kept BOC facilities COVID-19 free for nearly five months. But the increased community spread of the coronavirus in the Virgin Islands in recent weeks also increased the risk that an asymptomatic carrier could bring the virus into a BOC facility.

BOC is working collaboratively with the CDC, DOH, V.I.P.D., the V.I. courts, and the criminal justice community at large to mitigate the introduction and spread of the coronavirus at any BOC facility. BOC will update the community as more information becomes available.

Please send inquiries to Mr. Winthrop Maduro, BOC's Public Information Officer.

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