GOVERNMENT OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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PRESS RELEASE

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March 16, 2020

Health Department Announces Second Confirmed
Territorial COVID-19 Case

St. Croix, US Virgin Islands (March 16, 2020) The U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Health today announced it has received confirmation of its second confirmed case of COVID-19 disease. Today's notification brings the territory's total number of confirmed cases to two (2); with the first in the St. Croix District and now our second confirmed case in the St. Thomas and St. John District.

Health officials have been closely monitoring the global outbreak and building capacity to respond to positive cases in the territory. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed today that we now have a second positive, confirmed case of COVID-19 disease in the U.S. Virgin Islands. If you are experiencing flu like symptoms and have traveled to one of the five countries posted previously (China, Iran, South Korea, Europe or Japan) or more recently to the United Kingdom, Ireland or any of the following U.S. states (New York, California, or Washington state) in the last 14 days, please self-quarantine and call (340) 712-6299 or 340-776-1519.

The department's Epidemiology Division continues to conduct testing for cases that meet the Person Under Investigation (PUI) criteria, conduct contact tracing and assist healthcare providers and the public with up-to-date education as to what to do to prevent additional cases.

The current risk of transmission in the V.I. remains low for most residents, but precautions should still be taken to avoid transmission within the community. A person may also get COVID-19 by touching a surface that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes.

To avoid the virus and help prevent its spread, Department of Health officials recommend these steps:

- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible.
- Stay home if sick.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and discard the tissue. Wash hands immediately. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60 percent alcohol.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention currently recommend avoiding non-essential travel to any of the locations listed above as well as no cruise ship travel. Older adults and those with underlying health issues are particularly vulnerable and should avoid crowded places and non-essential air travel to decrease their risk for virus transmission.

COVID-19 symptoms reported include fever, cough and shortness of breath. It spreads mostly between people who are in close contact via respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Persons who have contracted COVID-19 are most likely to spread it when they are most symptomatic. This means they are more likely to spread it to others when they are sick.

If you or a loved one are showing coronavirus symptoms and have recently traveled to an area with person-to-person spread, or been in contact with someone with coronavirus, you should contact the Department of Health at 340-712-6299 or 340-776-1519. You will be given instructions on what to do next and that may include isolating yourself from others.

If you have a medical emergency, call 911 and let them know if you have been infected or you believe that you may be.

For more information, visit: doh.vi.gov/coronavirus or cdc.gov/covid19.

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