



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

VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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PRESS RELEASE

January 29, 2020

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DOH Maintains COVID-19 Vaccine is Free

St. Croix, US Virgin Islands — The VI Department of Health maintains that there is no out-of-pocket cost for the COVID-19 vaccine. Healthcare providers who are part of the COVID-19 vaccination program are mandated by the Centers for Disease Control to submit claims for administrative fees and expenses instead of charging patients who are interested in receiving the vaccine. The department is now serving phase 1B.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “vaccine doses purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost. However, vaccination providers can charge an administration fee for giving someone the shot. Vaccination providers can be reimbursed for this by the patient’s public or private insurance company or, for uninsured patients, by the Health Resources and Services Administration’s Provider Relief Fund. No one can be denied a vaccine if they are unable to pay the vaccine administration fee.”

The Department of Health continues to monitor providers and regulate guidelines as established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Providers that do not comply with the Provider Agreement, face possible fines/penalties by HHS. The department encourages persons to report any violators to the Office of the Inspector General HHS, at 1-800-HHS-TIPS or TIPS.HHS.GOV.

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The department is aware of some providers who are charging patients around \$50-\$100 for the vaccines. The administrative fee, which providers can submit for reimbursement if a patient is unable to pay, is \$16.94 for the first dose and \$ 28.39 for the second dose. All healthcare providers participating in the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program must administer COVID-19 vaccines regardless of the vaccine recipient's ability to pay any COVID-19 vaccine administration fees or their insurance coverage status.

The department expresses gratitude for the collaboration with vaccinating providers for the vaccine roll-out and thanks the community for their willingness to receive the vaccine and their patience during the roll-out. Persons interested in what phase they may be eligible for are welcome to visit www.covid19usvi.com/vaccines.

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