

Government of the Virgin Islands  
of the United States

Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2020

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**DLCA ENCOURAGES SOCIAL DISTANCE SHOPPING**

The Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA) Commissioner, Richard T. Evangelista reminds consumers to practice social distancing when shopping.

On Wednesday, March 26, 2020, DLCA and Commissioner Trevor Velinor of the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) invited major grocery retailers across the Territory to meet via teleconference to discuss and share with each other all the measures implemented thus far to protect consumers and its staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grocery stores are deemed essential and exempt from the mass gathering by Governor Bryan's March 13, 2020 State of Public Health Emergency Executive Order, however social distancing must still be practiced. With one of the biggest shopping days fast approaching, grocers had the opportunity to voice foreseen challenges that they may encounter on April 1, 2020. A major concern raised by all the retailers is that many persons shop in groups making it difficult to enforce social distancing. DLCA and VIPD recommends that persons identify a representative for their respective household who can shop for the family. Before going to the store, ask members of your family what they want and generate a list of items to purchase. The list will organize your shopping and enable you to enter the store and pick up what you need without delay. Remember, persons are waiting to enter the store while you shop so get in and get out. Currently, the grocery is not a place to socialize.

"We are encouraging grocery shoppers to be mindful of the mass gathering rule" stated Commissioner Evangelista "If they are four members in your household, then all four members should not shop. Protection for your family is key"

Other best practices occurring throughout the Territory include:

1. Limiting the amount of essential supplies purchased per customer and allowing only a certain number of customers to shop at a time;
2. Establishing dedicated time slots for senior citizens, expectant mothers, persons with disabilities and persons with high risk diseases to shop;
3. Pressure washing shopping carts daily;
4. Establishing a 6 feet separation between customers at each cash register and only using every cash register when necessary and opting to use every other cash register; and
5. Providing gloves and hand sanitizer to the customers.



*"Serving Businesses and Assisting, Educating, & Protecting Consumers"*

[www.dlca.vi.gov](http://www.dlca.vi.gov)

Commissioner Evangelista would like to personally thank the grocery retailers for participating and to Commissioner Trevor Velinor and the VIPD team for addressing grocery retailer's security concerns. VIPD shall monitor and provide extra assistance on April 1, 2020.

For consumer related issues call (340) 727-SCAM (7226) in the District of St. Croix or (340) 771-SCAM (7226) on St. Thomas. You may also contact us via email at [consumerawareness@dlca.vi.gov](mailto:consumerawareness@dlca.vi.gov).

For more information on COVID-19, the new strain of coronavirus, please visit the USVI Department of Health's website, [doh.vi.gov/coronavirus](http://doh.vi.gov/coronavirus) or text COVID19USVI to 888777. For non-medical information call (340) 715-6843 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. 7 days per week. #COVID19USVI