

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS COVID-19 UPDATE Information for Leisure Travelers

April 5, 2021

The Territory is in the Safer-at-Home Phase of its State of Emergency.

Safer-at-Home Travel Restrictions

- The Territory is open to leisure travel
- Hotels and accommodations providers are permitted to accept guests
- Accommodations providers include hotels, villas, Bed and Breakfasts, Airbnb properties, guest houses, temporary vacation housing, charter vessels, and any similar businesses known by any other terminology

CDC Guidelines

- CDC guidelines that took effect on January 26, 2021, only apply to international air passengers directly arriving to or transiting through the U.S. Virgin Islands from a foreign country (i.e., anywhere that is NOT a state, territory or possession of the United States)
- SEE DETAILS BELOW

USVI Travel Screening Portal

- Every traveler aged five or older who enters the U.S. Virgin Islands, by air or sea, including anyone in-transit to another destination, is required to use the USVI Travel Screening Portal and submit a COVID-19 test result prior to travel to avoid processing delays, enhanced health screening and/or mandatory self-quarantine
 - Without travel certification from the portal, passengers may not be able to board an aircraft or vessel to the Territory
 - Upon arrival, you must produce your original test result and travel clearance email received from the Travel Screening Portal to avoid processing delays
 - The secure portal can be accessed at www.usvitraportal.com
 - If you are within 24 hours of your planned travel and have not received a response, please check your Junk, Spam or Promotions folder
 - You may also send a follow-up email to travelportal@usvitraportal.com and include the Tracking ID you received upon successfully completing your submission
- The Travel Screening Portal should only be completed within five days of travel
 - Molecular or antigen tests
 - Must be taken and results received during the the five-day window prior to travel
 - Tests taken or results received outside the five-day window do not meet the requirements
 - Click here to see a visual depiction of the five-day window: <https://bit.ly/2RJ5NeK>
 - Antibody tests
 - Must be taken within four months of commencement of travel to the USVI

- *Results may be submitted through the Travel Screening Portal only during the five-day window prior to travel*

Testing Guidelines

- Travelers are required to provide evidence of:
 - a COVID-19 molecular (e.g., RT-PCR, viral or nucleic acid amplification) test from a nasal or throat or oral rinse and/or saliva sample taken and NEGATIVE result received (both within five days of commencement of travel to the Territory)
OR
 - a COVID-19 antigen (rapid) test from a nasal or throat swab sample taken and NEGATIVE result received (both within five days of commencement of travel to the Territory)
OR
 - a COVID-19 antibody (rapid) finger stick or blood draw test taken and POSITIVE result received (both within four months of commencement of travel to the Territory)

Integrity of Test Results

Submission of a fake, forged or falsified test result is subject to prosecution and fine under Executive Order(s) of the Office of the Governor, USVI Department of Health regulations and/or pursuant to criminal code 14 V.I.C. § 843.

Quarantine

- Per the Department of Health, every person ordered to self-quarantine shall proceed directly from the airport or seaport to their home, vessel or booked accommodations provider
 - The self-quarantine period shall last for 10 days from the time of entry into the Territory, or until the traveler is able to receive the required health authority clearance while in the Territory
- Travelers who are required to self-quarantine are responsible for all quarantine costs, as advised by the USVI Department of Health and the Office of the Governor.
 - This includes costs associated with the COVID-19 test, transportation, accommodations, food and beverage, and medical care
- Travelers who fail to comply with self-quarantine regulations are subject to enforcement, prosecution and/or fine under Executive Order(s) of the Office of the Governor and USVI Department of Health regulations

CDC Travel Requirements

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) travel requirements related to COVID-19 for all air passengers arriving in the United States DO NOT apply to persons traveling/returning from the U.S. Virgin Islands to the U.S. mainland

- International air passengers directly arriving to or transiting through the U.S. Virgin Islands from a foreign country (i.e., anywhere that is NOT a state, territory or possession of the United States), must follow CDC travel requirements for entering the United States of America

https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/pdf/global-airline-testing-order_2021-01-2_R3-signed-encrypted-p.pdf.

- Some states in the U.S. have enacted COVID-19 travel requirements, such as the need to provide evidence of COVID-19 testing within a specified period of time, for travelers entering (or returning to) that state.
 - Travelers departing from the USVI are advised to check with their intended destination to determine what, if any, COVID-19 travel or testing requirements are in place
 - Should testing be required, a list of labs in the Territory that offer COVID-19 testing can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3g41mWI>

COVID-19 Vaccination

Evidence of COVID-19 vaccination does not supersede the COVID-19 testing requirement set forth by the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

- Travelers who have received a COVID-19 vaccination are required to use the USVI Travel Screening Portal and submit a COVID-19 test result prior to travel

Testing Requirements for USVI Residents

Travelers who originate in the USVI and return to the Territory, regardless of the length of time away, must take a test before returning or have proof of a positive antibody test result within the previous four-month period. A COVID-19 molecular or antigen test taken in the USVI is NOT acceptable for travel from the U.S. mainland. However, antibody test results that are positive for COVID-19 antibodies from a test administered in the USVI are acceptable. For more information, visit www.usviupdate.com, email info@usviupdate.com, or call 40 774-8784, 340 772-0357 or 1-800-372-USVI (8784).

Previous COVID-19 Diagnosis

Travelers who have been diagnosed previously with COVID-19 are required to provide either a positive (or “reactive”) result from an antibody finger stick or blood draw test or a negative result from an antigen or molecular COVID-19 test

- A letter from a physician or other health care provider, including a local/county/state Health Department, is not acceptable as a substitute for the required COVID-19 test result
- The original positive COVID-19 antigen or molecular test result (dated at time of diagnosis) is not acceptable as evidence of a traveler’s current health status or as a substitute for an acceptable COVID-19 test result

Airports

- The Territory’s airports are open
- Travelers are advised to contact their airline regarding schedule changes or updates
- Incoming passengers are subject to enhanced health screenings and temperature checks to identify potential health risks and may be required to take a COVID-19 test
- All arriving passengers MUST wear a mask or facial covering upon disembarkation and comply with social distance requirements

- Travelers should monitor the United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and airline websites for travel advisories and other pertinent airline screening guidelines

Masks

Masks or facial coverings are required and must cover the mouth and nose. This requirement is enforced by a fine.

- Any person who is not in his or her private home or vehicle is required to wear a face mask or facial covering when two or more individuals who do not share the relationship of family members, caretakers, household members or romantic partners meet or interact in any manner
- Children under two and persons unable to remove a mask without assistance are exempt
- Individuals with chronic respiratory conditions should seek advice from their primary care physician for alternative types of masks, avoid crowds, and practice social distancing
- Masks with exhalation vents should not be worn
- Ski masks and stocking caps are prohibited for use as facial coverings
- Masks or facial coverings do not have to be worn during active exercise, indoor or outdoor

Social Distancing and COVID-19 practices

- All travelers must comply with social distancing requirements
- Individuals are urged to continue to wash hands, use hand sanitizer and practice proper respiratory etiquette (including coughing into the elbow) as often as possible

Gatherings

- Gatherings are limited to no more than 100 individuals in a single room or space
- Mass Gatherings (of more than 100 persons) are prohibited
 - Organized activities must obtain approval from the Department of Health, in addition to the relevant regulatory agency prior to the activity

Beaches

- Public beaches are open
- All beaches shall be closed from 5 p.m. until 6 a.m. the following day on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays
- No picnics, parties, disc jockey (DJ), DJ equipment or the likes, camping, bonfires, cooking, barbecuing or grilling are permitted on any beach

Transportation

- Taxis can transport more than the 50 percent capacity limit if all the passengers are part of the same family or group
- All passengers and drivers of mass or public transportation, including but not limited to Vitran buses, taxicabs and automobiles for hire, shall be required to wear a mask or facial covering
- Facial coverings shall be required to be worn at all times on board all public transportation ferries between all islands in or entering the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands

Retail

- Limited to one-half of their previously allowable capacity, or 100 customers, whichever is less
- This does not apply to grocery stores, big-box stores, pharmacies and fuel service service stations

Restaurants and Food Trucks

- Restaurants will be allowed to resume dine-in operations under the following conditions:
 - Restaurants can seat up to 75 percent of their approved seating capacity, and they can seat more than six people at the same table if all diners are in the same party
 - Shall be closed from midnight to 6 a.m. daily
 - No congregating or standing at bar counter area is permitted
 - No sitting or serving of alcohol at bar counters is permitted
 - Seated patrons may order food or alcohol, or both, once stationed at designated seating areas
 - Tables must be six feet apart
 - Employees must wear facial coverings at all times
 - Patrons should wear facial coverings whenever they are not seated at a table
 - Patrons waiting for take-out must wait outside
 - No service of alcohol alone to persons outside the restaurant
- Food trucks shall operate on a drive-thru, takeout or delivery basis only
 - If seating area was previously permitted, then food truck can operate within relevant restaurant guidelines

Other Businesses

- Cabarets and nightclubs
 - All cabarets and nightclubs remain closed
- Bars
 - Bars are open for seated service only
 - In all bars and nightclubs, standing around the bar counter is not permitted
There shall be no sitting or serving of alcohol at bar counters
 - Seated patrons may order food or alcohol, or both, once stationed at designated seating areas
 - No more than six persons per table
 - Tables must be six feet apart
 - An 11 p.m. - 8 a.m. alcohol service/drinking curfew is in effect
 - No dancing is permitted by anyone, including staff, inside or outside any establishment with a bar, cabaret or nightclub license
 - The use of pool tables is permitted with facial coverings worn at all times. Hand sanitizers should be made accessible to all players. Pool sticks and the surrounding areas must be disinfected after each game.
 - Live music and DJ entertainment are allowed in licensed establishments until 12 a.m.
 - Limited to one-half of their previously allowable capacity, or 100 customers, whichever is less
- Bowling alleys and movie theaters are open
- Casinos and gaming establishments are open

- Sale of food and beverages and hosting of parties is prohibited
- Shall operate at no more than 25 percent of capacity
- Wellness centers, fitness centers, gyms, tennis courts and golf courses may reopen
 - Contact sports are prohibited
- Personal grooming services may reopen
 - All customers awaiting services must wait outside

Indoor/Outdoor Recreation facilities

Bowling alleys, movie theaters, casinos, and gaming centers are open pursuant to the following additional conditions:

- Closed to patrons from 12 a.m. until 6 a.m. daily.
- Number of patrons limited to 50 percent of the regular occupancy, or 100 customers, whichever is less

Athletic facilities

- Wellness centers, fitness centers, gyms, tennis courts, and golf courses are allowed to reopen
- The recommended social distancing requirement of six feet or more between individuals must be maintained, and group limits are set within the mass gathering limitations
- Contact sports are strictly prohibited

Personal Grooming Services

- Barbershops, hair salons, nail salons and massage therapists are permitted to reopen
- All customers awaiting services are to wait outside of the business establishment and must practice social distancing

Houses of Worship

- Churches and houses of worship are permitted to operate to 50 percent of their capacity or a maximum of 100 persons, whichever is less
 - The maximum number includes pastoral leaders, employees and volunteers
 - Facial coverings are to be worn at all times
 - Religious leaders should be 10 feet away from all persons while unmasked
 - Communion may be served in protected containers
 - Funerals and memorials are limited to immediate family and no more than 10 family members

Questions

Visitors or residents who have tourism-related inquiries are asked to email info@usviupdate.com or call the Department of Tourism's toll-free number at (800) 372-USVI (8784).

Like other destinations experiencing this unprecedented pandemic, the Territory continues to evaluate its policies. All guidance is subject to the Executive Orders of the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Please stay safe, and continue to monitor usviupdate.com.