



PRESS RELEASE

Department of Human Services Addresses Confirmed COVID-19 Positive, St. Croix & St. Thomas Head Start Administrative Offices Closed

For Immediate Release: July 29, 2021

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS - The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (DHS), today confirmed that it closed both the Anna's Hope Head Start Administrative Office in St. Croix and the Knud Hansen Head Start Office in St. Thomas as a staff member has tested positive for COVID-19. The offices will be closed until Tuesday, August 3, 2021 while DHS activates COVID-19 mitigation protocols and cleans the facilities. DHS is also working with the Department of Health to ensure contact tracing and staff members have been referred to Pop-Up testing sites. **The Head Start Administrative Offices in both districts will re-open on Wednesday, August 4, 2021.**

In the meantime, clients may contact the following numbers as staff will be working remotely:

St. Thomas/St. John:

- (340) 244-4369

St. Croix:

- (340) 772-1981
- (340) 773-1972

All other DHS offices will continue their normal operations. In an abundance of caution, employees that are identified as PUIs by the DOH must produce a COVID-19 negative test before returning to work.

Current Actions Being Taken

- A notification was sent to all staff advising of the COVID-19 positive results.

- DHS has referred staff to Pop-Up testing sites.
- The facility has been and will continue to be cleaned and sanitized according to protocol.
- DHS COVID-19 mitigation protocols continue to be emphasized with staff and include, masking of all staff, temperatures being taken before staff can enter the facility, self-attestation regarding potential exposure etc.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spread between people who are in close contact with one another (about 6 feet). The virus is spread through respiratory droplets that are produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or speaks.

Please be reminded to maintain CDC best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Wear your mask (covering your nose and mouth while in the workplace).
- Maintain social distance.
- Wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds, often.
- Wear appropriate other PPE while in contact with other staff or clients.
- Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol when you cannot your wash hands.
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently used surfaces.
- Share FACTS, not rumors.

For general information, please visit the Department of Human Services website, www.dhs.gov.vi or on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/usvidhs>) at US Virgin Islands Department of Human Services.

If you are experiencing any of the coronavirus symptoms listed on the Department of Health website (listed below), self-quarantine and immediately contact the Department of Health:

- V.I. DOH website: <https://doh.vi.gov/>
- COVID-19 Hotline: (340) 712-6299 or (340) 776-1519

For general information, please visit the Department of Human Services website, www.dhs.gov.vi or on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/usvidhs>) at US Virgin Islands Department of Human Services.

For more information on Covid19, the new strain of coronavirus, please visit the USVI Department of Health's website, www.doh.vi.gov/coronavirus or text COVID19USVI to 888777. #COVID19USVI

The Department of Human Services (VIDHS) exists to provide social services to members in our community with diverse needs. In times of national uncertainty and hardship we act as a safety-net and exist to inspire hope and empower change through non-judgmental, quality delivery of needed services and resources. Please visit the Department of Human Services website, www.dhs.gov.vi for more information.

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