



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Department of Human Services Licensed Summer Camp Guidelines for 2021

For Immediate Release: May 26, 2021

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS: The U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (DHS) advises upcoming summer camp facilities and providers starting operations for the June 2021 summer season of mandatory summer camp guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Providers must complete the application process through the DHS Office of Childcare & Regulatory Services (OCCRS) to operate licensed summer camps and programs in accordance with V.I. Code Title 34 Section 383, which states that *“no person may operate a child day care facility for three or more unrelated children unless he or she holds a valid license issued by the Department of Human Services.”* Those operating out of compliance will be subject to fines and closures.

Informed by the VI Department of Health (DOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), summer camp programs are advised as follows:

- The OCCRS strongly recommends that all summer camp staff be vaccinated
- The maximum occupancy for licensed summer camp facilities must be half of the original licensed capacity or must not exceed 200 campers (whichever is less.)
- Camps must be adequately staffed with enough space for mandatory social distancing

Summer camp counselors must be at least 16-years and older, must undergo a sex offender check through the Office of Childcare and Regulatory Services (OCCRS), must clear a local background check with the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD), and possess an up-to-date Health Card through the VI Department of Health.

The guidelines also require that summer camps enforce entry protocols like temperature checks and ongoing health screenings, mandate masks for staff and campers at all times, maintain six feet of physical distance, prohibit sports with high levels of physical contact, and immediately follow isolation protocols with proper supervision if staff or campers begin to exhibit COVID-19 symptoms.

If a camper or staff member presents a COVID-19 positive test result, the individual must provide a negative test or an official clearance statement from the VI Department of Health in order to return to camp.

Summer camp facilities and childcare providers are asked to seek the most up-to-date guidance on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/summer-camps.html>

Providers seeking to run a summer camp program must contact the Office of Childcare and Regulatory Services to become licensed:

St. Croix:

#129 Golden Rock,
Christiansted, St. Croix 00820
(340) 772-7147

St. Thomas:

1303 Hospital Ground Knud Hansen Complex
St. Thomas, VI 00802
(340) 774-0930 Ext. 4181

Unlicensed facilities are not permitted to operate and are subject to a fine of \$1,000 a day per V.I. Code Title 34 Section 396, "Any person who operates a facility without a license or certification as required under this chapter, or who places a public advertisement for an unlicensed facility, is subject to civil penalty of not more than \$1,000 for each day of violation and for each act of violation, as the court may deem proper." Title 34 Section 397 cites, if an unlicensed facility is found guilty by the Court of a misdemeanor, the Child Care Operator can also face imprisonment not to exceed three months, or a fine.

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

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.

For more information on COVID-19, please visit our website, covid19usvi.com, or text COVID19USVI to 888777. To report a suspected COVID-19 case, call (340) 712-6299 or (340) 776-1519.

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