



# PRESS RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*  
*October 1, 2021*

## **DHS Reminds Head Start Families that In-Person Learning For All St. Croix Classes Resumes Monday, October 4**

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (DHS), issued a reminder today, that in-person classroom activities on St. Croix, will resume on Monday, October 4, 2021. The Head Start Program had experienced COVID positives, as well as exposures at several Head Start sites and notification of confirmed COVID positives in the homes of program participants. DHS opted to close all classrooms for a one-week period to allow for COVID testing and to curtail on-the-job exposures.

Department of Human Services Commissioner Kimberley Causey Gomez stated, “We believe that we have acted responsibly and always with the safety of our staff and students as the primary concern in our minds. While in-person instruction was paused on St Croix, staff was working diligently to ensure that if this pandemic environment is going to require us to toggle back and forth between in-person and virtual, when necessary, we will be able to do so with undue interruption to our provision of services to our children and families.”

Assistant Commissioner Carla Benjamin added, “We are going to keep our eyes and ears open. We are going to try our best to improve communication with staff, the union, our Head Start parents, our sister agencies and the community, so that we all understand our assignments. We don’t necessarily have to agree but doing this safely is DHS’ responsibility.”

For information, contact the VIDHS Head Start Program at telephone number 340-773-1972 in the St. Croix District, 340-774-0930 ext. 4200 in the St. Thomas-St. John District, by email to [headstartvi@dhs.vi.gov](mailto:headstartvi@dhs.vi.gov) or by visiting <http://www.dhs.gov.vi/preschool/index.html>

To enroll your child in the Head Start program, utilize the online application portal:

Go to <https://vihs.mycopa.com/familyPortal/childCare.epl>

Select preferred language (English or Spanish) by clicking on English or Español in the top right corner  
Click on “Register”

Give consent

Create a family and child profile

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](http://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](http://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](http://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, <http://www.dhs.gov.vi> for more information.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit [transparency.vi.gov](http://transparency.vi.gov)

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