

PRESIDENT TRUMP TO VISIT U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
*Schools expected to be back in session in St. Thomas/St. John
on Monday, October 9*

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS - President of the United States Donald J. Trump will visit the U.S. Virgin Islands, Governor Kenneth E. Mapp confirmed at his daily media briefing on Wednesday.

Governor Mapp indicated that while full details of the visit are unavailable at the moment, the White House, the advance team along with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Government of the Virgin Islands were working out the logistics surrounding the President's arrival.

At a meeting with senior officials on Hurricane Maria on Wednesday, the President stressed that his top priorities are life-saving and life-sustaining efforts in the affected areas. He emphasized the need to remain steadfast in supporting the ongoing response and recovery efforts in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and made it clear that there is no such thing as over-responding, and that he expects all elements of the Federal Government to plan for long-term support to the Governors of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

He praised the leadership provided by the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, and Governors Ricardo Rosselló of Puerto Rico and Governor Mapp before, during, and after the impact of the recent storms; and extended his thoughts and prayers to those affected, thanking all the first responders who are dedicating their time and efforts to their fellow Americans.

"We will continue to work to make sure the President has a good, warm Virgin Islands welcome and that he is able to see all of the issues that are affecting the people of the Territory with respect to Hurricane(s) Irma and Maria," Governor Mapp remarked.

President Trump recently amended the U.S. Virgin Islands Disaster Declaration to authorize an increase in federal funding for debris removal and emergency protective measures in the Territory. He increased cost sharing to 100 percent Federal cost share for debris removal and emergency protective measures, including direct Federal assistance, for 180 days from the start of the incident period.

Meanwhile, Governor Mapp announced school is expected to be back in session in the St. Thomas/St. John district on Monday, October 9.

Commissioner of Education Dr. Sharon McCollum, who joined Governor Mapp along with other officials at Wednesday's news conference, reported that Addelita Cancryn Junior High School and Emanuel Benjamin Oliver Elementary School on St. Thomas have been condemned due to damages from the hurricanes. With the children's safety and continued learning being priorities, split sessions in the morning and afternoon will be offered at functioning schools to accommodate all students in the St. Thomas/St. John district. Grade 12 students across the Territory will be given priority as the Department does not want their senior year to be significantly impacted. To that end, there will be a meeting for all senior students in the St. Thomas/St. John district on Friday, September 29, at 11 a.m. at the Charlotte Amalie Auditorium. A similar meeting is expected to be held for seniors on St. Croix.

"We may be speaking soon about school resumption for St. Croix," Governor Mapp said. "We continue to make assessments ... but I want parents and students in St. Croix to know that we haven't forgotten you," Governor Mapp said.

The Department of Education will be relaxing the uniform requirement, Commissioner McCollum said, to accommodate students who don't have uniforms. Those who have them, however, should wear them, she said. All Department of Education personnel across the Territory should report to work within one hour of the lifting of the curfew on Thursday, September 28.

As the hurricane recovery process continues, all adjusters traveling to the Territory to assess insurance claims will be vetted by the Government and issued official IDs stamped by the Lieutenant Governor's Office. Governor Mapp implored residents to exercise caution when interacting with anyone who asks to inspect their property.

"Folks who know how to prey upon people will use the opportunity to do that," Governor Mapp cautioned. He advised residents to ask for the adjuster's credentials and government ID and take a photo of both the person and his/her

identification. "If they say, 'Well I left it (government ID) at the office' or 'I don't have it with me', you bid them *adieu*. Rely on your common sense and your intellect," the Governor added.

The Governor offered assurances that there is a sufficient supply of fuel in the Territory. Currently there are nearly 21 million barrels of fuel in the U.S. Virgin Islands, including four million barrels of diesel fuel. Individuals needing fuel are asked to be patient and understand that there may be delays in fuel delivery due to the increased demand at this time. The Governor added that the Government of the Virgin Islands has no authority under the law to instruct fuel retailers which customers to service.

Governor Mapp announced that all postal maintenance employees on St. Croix must report to the Kingshill Post Office on Thursday, September 28.

The curfew remains in effect across the Territory. On St. Croix, it is from 6 p.m. to 11 a.m.; and on St. John, St. Thomas and Water Island, from 6 p.m. to 8 a.m.

Anyone experiencing psychological distress as a result of the hurricanes can call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 (press 2 for Spanish). The helpline provides free, confidential and multilingual counseling and crisis support. The helpline can also be reached via SMS by texting *talkwithus* (for English) or *hablanos* (for Spanish) to 1-212-461-4635.

Residents can register for disaster assistance by calling 1-800-621-3362 or visiting www.disasterassistance.gov.

The official website to donate to the U.S. Virgin Islands recovery effort is usvirecovery.org.

Other resources for information include:

Government House: informusvi.com

VITEMA: vialert.gov

VITEMA Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/vitema>

Government House Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GovernmentHouseUSVI/>

The Department of Tourism: www.usviupdate.com

Emergency Operation Centers:

(340) 773-2244 (St. Croix)

(340) 776-2244 (St. John)

(340) 774-2244 (St. Thomas)

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