



GOVERNMENT OF THE
VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

Tel: (284)468-2730

Official Government Website:

<https://gov.vg>

Legitimate Interest Access now fully operational in The Virgin Islands

Release Date: 1 April, 2026



The Government of the Virgin Islands is pleased to announce the launch of the new Legitimate Interest Access (LIA) system, which is now operational and enables eligible applicants to request access to beneficial ownership information.

The new system follows an extensive programme of legislative, operational and technical work and is aligned with the approach taken by other financial centres globally, including the European Union's 6th Anti Money Laundering Directive (AMLD6). This represents an important step forward in further strengthening The Virgin Islands' financial system as part of the global fight against economic crime while protecting key privacy rights of individuals.

This approach is consistent with that taken by other Overseas Territories and reflects the broader international direction of travel for financial centres, including in the European Union, where access to beneficial ownership registers is now moving toward legitimate interest-based models following the 2022 Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ruling.

Delivered through the modern and secure VIRRGIN platform, journalists, academics and civil society actors will now be able to apply for access to verified information contained in The Virgin Islands' Register of Beneficial Ownership in those instances where they can demonstrate a legitimate anti-money laundering, counter-terrorist financing or counter-proliferation financing purpose.

International law enforcement agencies already benefit from rapid, 24/7 access to beneficial ownership information through established information-sharing arrangements under the Exchange of Notes framework, and this will not change under the new system. This enables timely and coordinated investigations into cross-border criminal networks and sanctions evasion schemes, as demonstrated by recent international action taken against the Prince Group.

LIA reflects the Territory's continued alignment with best practice while maintaining appropriate safeguards for individual privacy and data protection that are subject to strict legal guarantees under The Virgin Islands' Constitution. It is fully consistent with the measures taken by other jurisdictions around the world, in accordance with best practice in corporate transparency, anti-money laundering

(AML), counterterrorism financing (CFT), and counter-proliferation financing (CPF).

Commenting following the Regime’s implementation, Premier Honourable Dr. Natalio D. Wheatley said: *“This Regime represents a significant milestone of which we should all be proud. Following a comprehensive domestic and international stakeholder engagement process, we have now established a balanced framework that strongly deters financial crime while protecting the right to individual privacy outlined by our Constitution. The result is a historic achievement which will ensure The Virgin Islands retains its place as a trusted, internationally respected jurisdiction for decades to come.”*

Minister with responsibility for Financial Services and Economic Development, Honourable Lorna Smith, OBE added: *“The Virgin Islands has long played a pivotal role in safeguarding the integrity of the global financial system. This regime builds on that record by enhancing transparency and strengthening global efforts to tackle financial crime in accordance with best practice – reinforcing our position as a trusted and responsible financial centre.”*

For Additional Information Contact:

Ministry of Financial Services, Economic Development and Digital Transformation

Second Floor, Romasco Place
Road Town, Tortola
Virgin Islands (British) VG1110

mfseddt@gov.vg | 284-468-2112