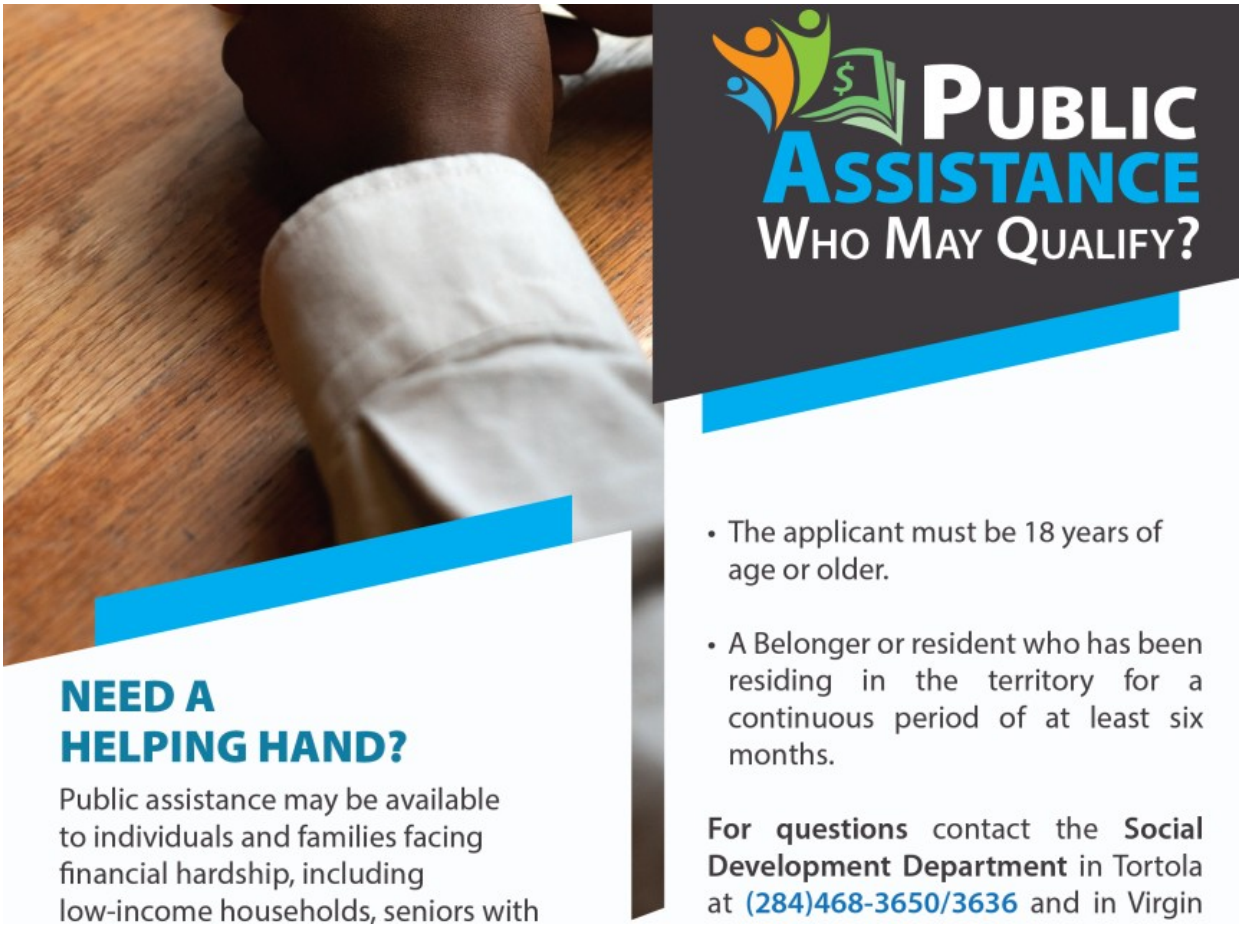
GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Social Assistance Information Campaign Launched as Part of Reform Initiative

Release Date: 17 November, 2026



The Ministry of Health and Social Development, through the Social Development Department, is launching a targeted public information campaign to increase awareness of social assistance services, eligibility requirements and application procedures.

The initiative forms part of the Government of the Virgin Islands' Governance Reform Public Awareness Campaign, being observed from September to December 2026. The wider campaign highlights Government's reform efforts, progress in service delivery and initiatives aimed at improving the public's experience when accessing Government services.

As part of the Ministry's contribution, the Social Development Department will undertake a series of communications activities designed to provide residents with practical information on available assistance programmes and how to access them.

The information campaign will feature press releases, informational flyers, a short explainer video, and social media graphics. These materials will address eligibility requirements, application procedures, available benefits, recertification and emergency assistance.

Ag. Chief Social Development Officer Ms. Shirma George said the initiative reflects the Department's commitment to improving public access to information and helping residents better understand the services available to them.

“Effective public service delivery begins with ensuring that people have access to clear and accurate information. Through this campaign, we want residents to better understand the assistance available, how to apply and what is required to maintain their benefits. By making this information more accessible, we are helping individuals and families navigate our services with greater confidence,” Ms. George said.

The Department's Social Assistance Division provides financial and other support to eligible individuals and families experiencing hardship. Services include basic income support, food, rental, utilities, medical, funeral and burial, and emergency assistance. The Division also supports vulnerable seniors and persons with disabilities through case management and referrals to other services.

Eligibility is determined through an assessment of household income, individual circumstances and established programme requirements. Persons who are employed but experiencing financial difficulty may also apply.

The Social Welfare Officer serves as the primary point of contact for beneficiaries, guiding them through the application process and conducting comprehensive needs assessment. Thereafter, they will submit the completed application to the Public Assistance Committee for review and consideration. Following the Committee’s decision, the applicant will be notified of the outcome. All completed applications are addressed within thirty days from the date of receipt. Emergency applications are addressed within an eight hour working day.

Supporting documents includes photo identification, National Health Insurance information, proof of income and residency status, and relevant financial, rental, utility or medical records.

The Department is also reminding existing beneficiaries to complete periodic recertification reviews, attend scheduled appointments and report changes in income or household circumstances to avoid possible interruptions in assistance.

Emergency assistance is also available to eligible individuals and families affected by house fires, natural disasters, sudden financial hardship, medical emergencies and other unforeseen crises.

Throughout the information campaign, residents are encouraged to follow the Ministry's official communications channels for updates, educational materials and guidance on accessing social assistance services.

For additional information, persons may contact the Social Assistance Division at **(284) 468-3650**.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development remains committed to protecting and promoting the health and social well-being of the people of the Virgin Islands through effective policies, sustainable programmes and strategic partnerships that support a safe, healthy and resilient society.

For Additional Information Contact:

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