GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

STATEMENT

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OFFICIAL STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE VINCENT O. WHEATLEY MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT VIOLENT INCIDENT AT VIRGIN GORDA DUMPSITE 17 NOVEMBER 2026

Release Date: 17 November, 2026



Fellow Virgin Islanders, residents and visitors,

The Ministry of Health and Social Development strongly condemns the reported violent assault on an employee of the Department of Waste Management at the Virgin Gorda Dumpsite earlier today.

The incident occurred while the employee was performing his duties, providing guidance to a member of the public on the appropriate location for waste disposal at the facility.

I am deeply disturbed by this incident and extend my heartfelt concern and best wishes to the injured employee for a full and speedy recovery. My thoughts are also with his family, colleagues and others affected by this unfortunate occurrence.

The Ministry, in collaboration with the Department of Waste Management, is taking the necessary steps to ensure that the affected employees receive appropriate

care and support.

Let me be clear. **Violence, threats and intimidation directed at public officers carrying out their duties are unacceptable.** No employee should be subjected to physical harm simply for carrying out their responsibilities in service to the public.

Public officers play an essential role in maintaining the services upon which our communities depend. They deserve to perform their duties in an environment where their safety, dignity and well-being are respected.

The matter is now receiving the attention of the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force, and the Ministry will cooperate fully with the authorities as the investigation proceeds.

As an immediate precautionary measure, the Virgin Gorda Dumpsite has been closed to the public for the remainder of today, Tuesday, 17 November, 2026. Operations are expected to resume tomorrow, Wednesday, 18 November, 2026 subject to confirmation that it is safe to do so. The public will be advised of any changes to these arrangements.

I wish to remind residents and waste haulers that the directions provided by personnel at our waste disposal facilities are intended to ensure the safe, orderly and responsible management of the sites. I therefore appeal to all users of these facilities to cooperate with staff, observe established procedures and treat those providing these essential services with courtesy and respect.

In light of this incident, the Ministry will work with the Department to review existing safety arrangements and identify additional measures necessary to strengthen the protection of employees and members of the public.

To the employees of the Department of Waste Management and indeed all public officers across the Territory, I would like to reaffirm that your safety and well-being matter. Your service is valued, and you should never have to fear for your personal safety while fulfilling your responsibilities to the people of The Virgin Islands.

We remain committed to ensuring that our public facilities are safe, respected and accessible environments for everyone.

I thank the Virgin Gorda community for its understanding and cooperation during this temporary disruption.

May God continue to bless and protect the people of The Virgin Islands.

For Additional Information Contact:

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