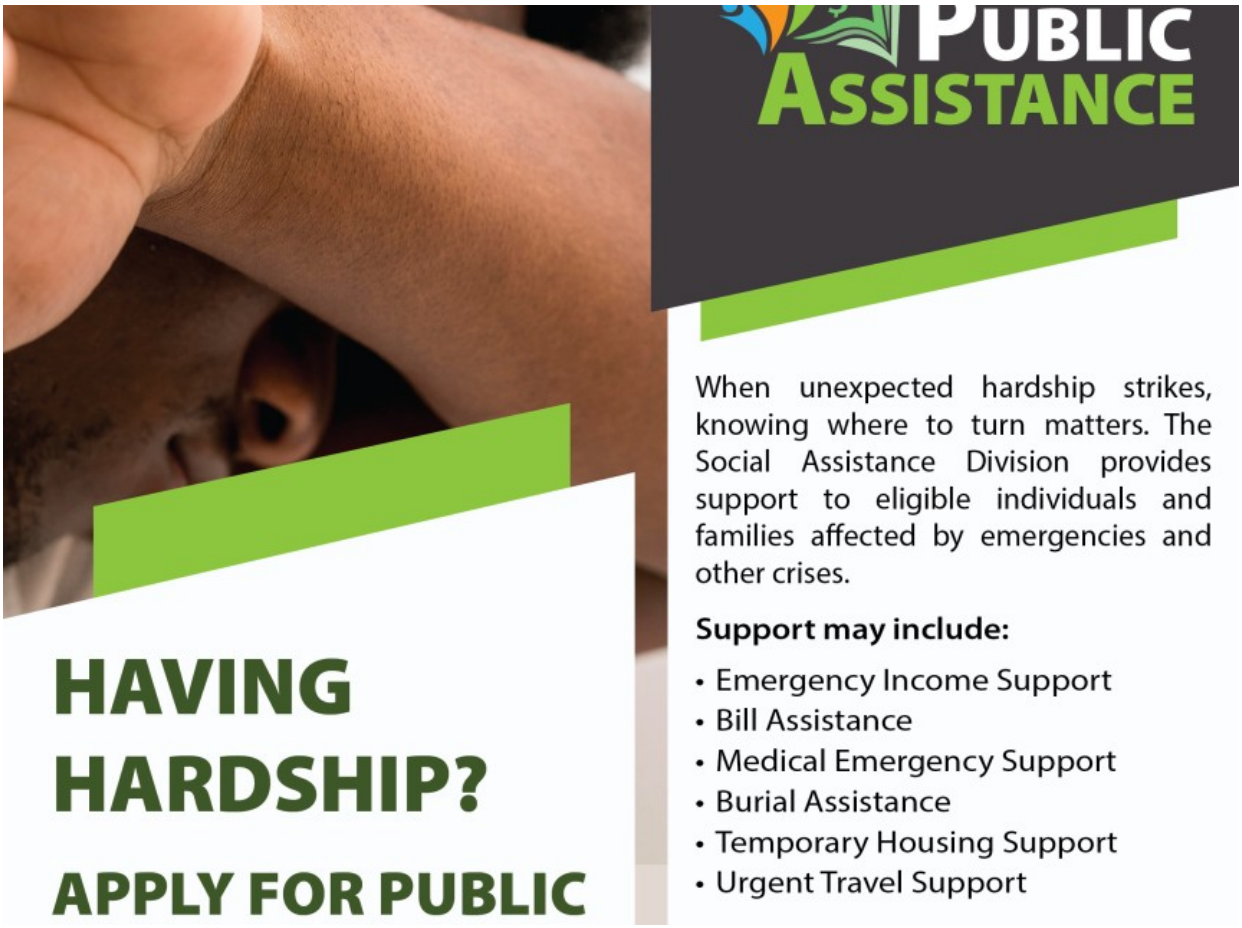
GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

Tel: (284)468-2730
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Social Development Highlights Emergency Assistance as Part of Campaign

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The Ministry of Health and Social Development, through the Social Development Department, is highlighting the availability of emergency assistance for eligible individuals and families experiencing unexpected crises and financial hardship.

The initiative forms part of the Ministry's Social Assistance Public Information Campaign, being undertaken in support of the Government of the Virgin Islands' Governance Reform Public Awareness Campaign.

Through a series of press releases and informational flyers the Department is providing residents with practical information on available social assistance programmes, eligibility requirements, application procedures and recertification.

As part of this outreach, the Department is reminding residents that emergency assistance may be available to persons affected by house fires, natural disasters, sudden loss of income, medical emergencies and other unforeseen circumstances that affect their ability to meet basic needs.

Acting Chief Social Development Officer, Ms. Shirma George said ensuring that vulnerable residents know where to seek assistance is an important part of improving access to social protection services.

“An unexpected crisis can place tremendous pressure on individuals and families, particularly those already experiencing financial challenges. Our responsibility is to ensure that vulnerable residents know where to turn for guidance and support. Through our social assistance programmes, we remain committed to helping individuals and families navigate difficult circumstances with dignity and access the assistance available to them.”

The Department's Social Assistance Division works with Government agencies and community partners to assess individual circumstances, identify available resources and connect persons with appropriate support.

Eligibility for emergency assistance is determined through an assessment of household income, individual circumstances and established programme requirements.

Residents experiencing an emergency are encouraged to contact the Social Assistance Division to discuss their circumstances and receive guidance on the application process.

In addition to emergency assistance, the Division provides support for basic financial needs, food, rent, utilities and medical expenses. Case management and referrals to community support services are also available.

The Ministry's information campaign seeks to ensure that residents are better informed about these services and understand the procedures involved in accessing assistance.

Persons requiring additional information may contact the Social Assistance Division at (284) 468-3650 or visit the Social Development Department located next the Red Cross.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development remains committed to strengthening social protection, improving access to public services and supporting the well-being of vulnerable individuals and families throughout the Virgin Islands.

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