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GVI Makes Initial \$2.5 Million Payment to Pafford, Covering Dialysis and EMS Amid Debt Settlement Efforts

The payment marks a critical step in settling arrears owed for vital medical services, including dialysis care, provided by Pafford in the territory

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The Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI) announced Friday evening the initial payment of \$2.5 million to Pafford Medical Services, marking an important step toward resolving the outstanding debt owed for critical emergency medical care provided to the territory.

This payment, which was [appropriated by the Virgin Islands Legislature through Act 8875](#) at the request of Governor Albert Bryan Jr., covers services rendered by Pafford Medical Services to the

Caribbean Kidney Center from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, amounting to \$2,111,507.10. Additional payments will cover costs for services utilized by the Virgin Islands Fire and Emergency Medical Services.

Pafford Medical Services was originally contracted under emergency circumstances following the devastation of Hurricanes Irma and Maria and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure the continuity of emergency medical services in the Virgin Islands. Their rapid and dedicated response during these challenging times was crucial to the health and safety of the territory's residents.

However, Governor Bryan [has said](#) that the services provided by Pafford were not intended to be a permanent solution. The administration added that cost of maintaining these essential services exceeds the financial capabilities of the Virgin Islands government without the federal funds that initially supported Pafford's operations. The press release further stated that while this initial payment addresses part of the arrears owed, it also reflects the GVI's commitment to ensuring that Pafford is compensated for the services rendered.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. emphasized the administration's ongoing commitment to the health and well-being of the Virgin Islands community. "Our administration has been steadfast in expanding and improving access to critical medical services over the past five years, including the enhancement of diabetes and dialysis care. We recognize the essential role that Pafford Medical Services has played in providing emergency care during our most challenging times, and we are grateful for their partnership," he said.

According to the release, in November 2021, Governor Bryan supported \$1 million in funding to the Virgin Islands Healthcare Foundation to establish and open an outpatient dialysis center and clinic on St. Croix. This facility provides outpatient dialysis and renal dietetic services to residents. Additionally, the governor supported a \$2.9 million grant through the American Rescue Plan Act to the V.I. Diabetes Center of Excellence and the Virgin Islands Healthcare Foundation, aimed at delivering free preventative education and diabetes care to Virgin Islands residents.

Despite these advancements, the financial challenges of sustaining Pafford's services without federal support remain. The Bryan administration previously revealed that with post-hurricane and COVID-19 relief funds from the federal government exhausted, the local government can no longer afford to pay for Pafford's services on a permanent basis. The GVI is now working with Pafford and other locum services to address any existing gaps in medical services that surpass local capabilities.

In addition to the \$2.5 million payment, the administration said it is collaborating with the Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center and the Schneider Regional Medical Center (SRMC) to address increased staffing needs and expand infrastructure to accommodate more patients. Both hospitals are working to enhance services for the dialysis population, with SRMC set to provide additional services beginning in October 2024, and JFL in January 2025, according to the release.