

V.I. Government Still Owes Over \$8 Million to Pafford Medical as ImpleCare Flyer Raises Concerns

VIFEMS denies any contract with ImpleCare after a recruitment flyer sparks confusion. Pafford is owed \$3 million by VIFEMS, \$2.25 million by JFL Hospital, \$1.7 million by the Department of Health, and \$821,000 by the Bureau of Corrections

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A flyer on Facebook advertising opportunities for qualified paramedics in the Virgin Islands raised eyebrows in some circles, both by government agency officials and representatives of the company who the government still owes millions of dollars for medical staffing.

There is no truth to the rumor that the Virgin Islands Fire and Emergency Medical Services has contracted ImpleCare to supply paramedics, VIFEMS Director Antonio Stevens told the

Consortium on Tuesday. The question arose over the weekend when Craig Flemming, listed as a partner in the San Antonio, TX company, [posted a recruitment flyer](#) on social media promoting “exciting paramedic opportunities in the U.S. Virgin Islands.”

However, when contacted for clarification, Mr. Stevens was adamant. “That company did reach out to us, but we have not made any agreement,” he declared. Mr. Stevens said that he would ask Mr. Fleming to take down the recruitment poster, as he believes it is misleading and causing confusion. The Consortium has been unable to reach Mr. Fleming as of press time.

Director Stevens did acknowledge the debt owed to Pafford Medical Services, but noted that it wasn't just VIFEMS that had outstanding invoices to clear. “It's not just one agency, but it's GVI as a whole,” he said.

The Government of the Virgin Islands [lost the services of Pafford last August](#), after its arrears to the company approached the \$10 million mark. The Department of Health, VIFEMS, and territorial hospitals, clinics and health centers were forced to try to keep up with services while adjusting to significant staff reductions as a result. While the government committed to paying what it owed, beginning with a \$2.3 million tranche of funds in late August, Pafford is still owed over \$8 million, according to Clay Hobbs, the company's Chief Operating Officer.

VIFEMS is responsible for over \$3 million of that sum for ambulance staffing, Mr. Hobbs disclosed. The Department of Health owes over \$1.7 million, while the outstanding balance for the Juan F. Luis Hospital is \$2.25 million. No payments have come from these agencies in months, Mr. Hobbs said. According to him, the Bureau of Corrections, which owes \$821,000, is the only agency currently chipping away at its debt. “They pay pretty regularly,” he noted. “They're really responsible. They do a good job over at Bureau of Corrections.”

As to when the other agencies will start clearing the outstanding balances, that is anyone's guess. Mr. Stevens and Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion both redirected the question to the governor's office. Richard Motta, Government House Communications Director, told the Consortium that “we're still working on that...that's an internal process that's still ongoing.” However, he was unable to provide any sort of timeline as to when the next tranche of funds would be remitted to Pafford. Mr. Motta promised to follow up on the issue.