

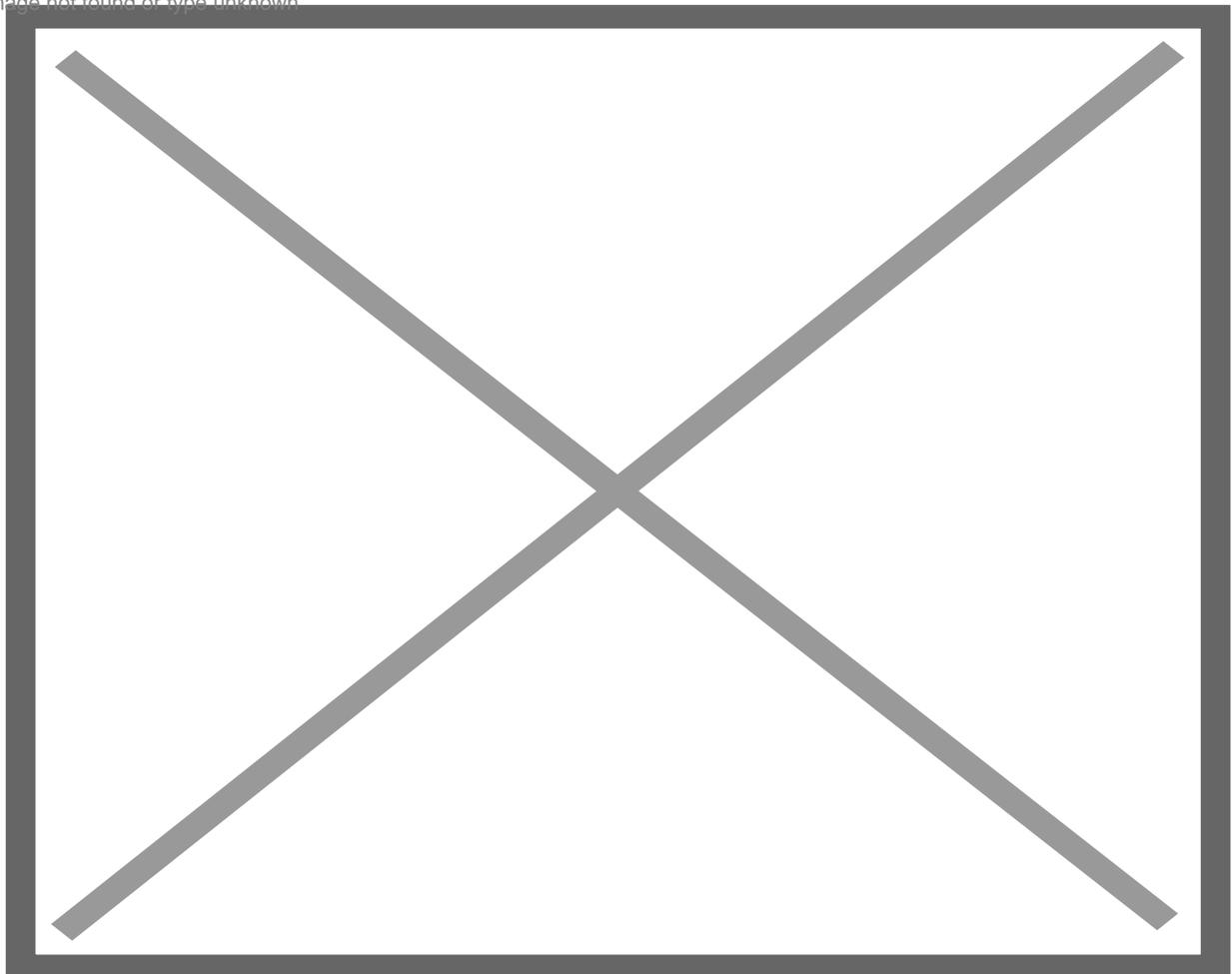
V.I. Businesses Must Provide Minimum of Two Payment Options, Says DLCA as Cash-Only Operations Come Under Fire

Amid debates around a potential sales tax and concerns raised by lawmakers about revenue collection, DLCA has clarified existing requirements mandating businesses to accept multiple payment methods, aiming to curb unmonitored cash transactions.

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The V.I. Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs has issued a reminder to businesses across the territory emphasizing compliance with local payment method requirements outlined in the territory's laws.

According to DLCA, it is a legal violation under Virgin Islands law for businesses to refuse acceptance of at least two distinct forms of payment from consumers.

The reminder follows Senate hearings [on the economic state of the U.S. Virgin Islands](#), where the matter of cash-only businesses was brought to the fore. During one hearing, Senator Novelle Francis Jr. urged the government's financial team to pay close attention to cash-only businesses, "making sure that what's due to Caesar is paid unto Caesar." It's something that the GVI is currently unable to monitor. "If a cash sale happens, if there's no transaction recorded, that cash goes, quite frankly, under someone's mattress or in their safe," said Bureau of Internal Revenue Director Joel Lee during the hearing.

The applicable statute, specifically 12A V.I.C. §§ 451-458, mandates that all businesses must at least accommodate cash payments along with either debit or credit card transactions. If, for any reason, a business becomes temporarily incapable of processing either cash or card payments, an alternative payment option must immediately be made available to customers, according to the law. Furthermore, if the business is unable to accept cash and debit or credit card payments for more than five consecutive business days, it is legally obligated to notify DLCA in writing. The notice should clearly describe the measures the business is undertaking to resume regular payment processing.

DLCA highlighted several specific requirements to ensure consumer transparency and convenience. Businesses are allowed to set a minimum purchase requirement for credit card use, but the amount cannot exceed \$10. This minimum must be explicitly posted and visible at checkout points.

Receipts are mandatory for any transaction equal to or greater than \$5.00. For transactions below \$5.00, receipts should still be provided when specifically requested by the consumer. Every receipt issued must clearly detail the list of items purchased, their individual prices, the date of the transaction, and the business's legal name and address.

The law also requires businesses with physical locations to display signage that clearly lists accepted payment methods. For those operating without physical premises or whose physical locations are limited or temporary, comparable prominent notification of payment options should still be provided.

However, the DLCA has outlined clear exceptions to these requirements. Specifically, exempted from compliance are certified fishermen (as recognized by DLCA), fishermen and farmers certified by the Department of Agriculture, as well as businesses generating annual revenues of less than \$50,000.

DLCA urged consumers who suspect violations of these regulations to file formal complaints. These complaints can also be made anonymously.

Businesses and consumers seeking additional information or needing assistance can visit DLCA's official website at www.dlca.vi.gov or contact the respective DLCA offices located in St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John.