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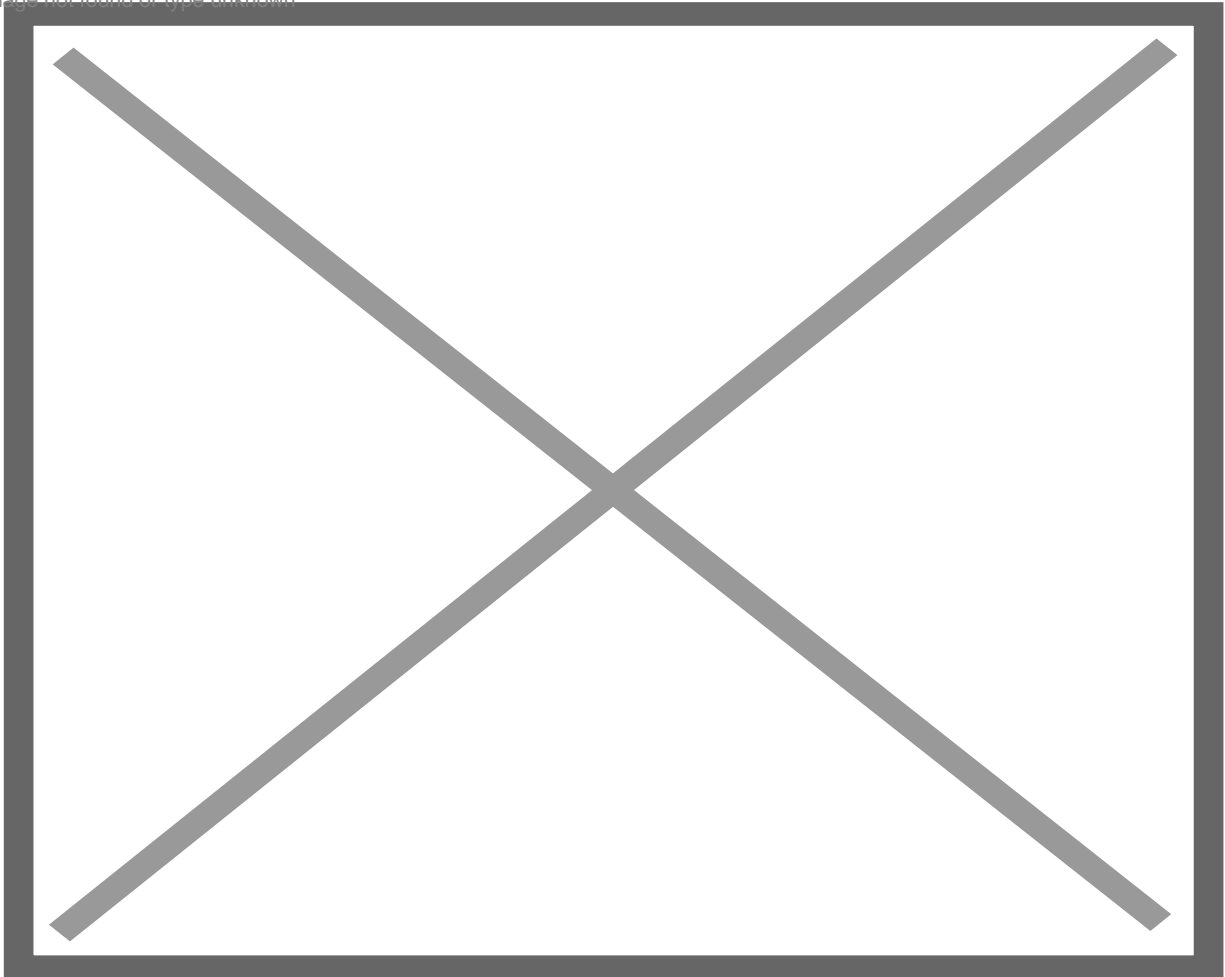
Retroactive Payments Coming Next Month, Bryan Says, as \$22.5 Million From Epstein Settlement Allocated to Settle Longstanding Wage Debts

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. signs Bill 36-0047 into law, allocating \$22.5 million from Epstein settlement funds to pay retroactive wages owed to current and former Virgin Islands government employees, addressing a longstanding financial commitment.

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Janeke Simon **April 28, 2025**

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Governor Albert Bryan Jr. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM.

On Monday, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. told press attending the weekly briefing from Government House that he had just signed into law a new promise to pay past wages owed to current and former government employees.

Earlier this month, the 36th Legislature [passed Bill 36-0047](#), which appropriates \$22.5 million from the Epstein settlement for the payment of retroactive wages. The move follows earlier attempts to provide allocations for retroactive wages that were [sidelined by finance officials](#) in favor of more pressing spending needs.

“For decades, many of our dedicated public servants have waited for the executive branch of the Virgin Islands government to make good on these commitments,” Governor Bryan said. Indeed, some will have to wait even longer, as the governor acknowledged that even after the current tranche is paid, government employees will still be owed \$120 million in retroactive wages.

Even as he admitted that there was a long way to go, Governor Bryan expressed satisfaction at being able to make good on at least some of the debt the government owes to its employees. “It has taken years of responsible financial management, careful planning, and a clear understanding that leadership means keeping our promises, even when those promises prove difficult to keep,” he noted.

In signing the bill, Governor Bryan said it was a “reaffirmation of the values that guide our work every day. Service must be honored, promises must be fulfilled, and leadership must be measured by action.” He thanked lawmakers for moving on his suggestion to utilize Epstein settlement funds to meet the obligation. “They took actual money that we have sitting in the bank and put it to use, rather than just an appropriation,” he said.

The money will be distributed to everyone still awaiting payments, Governor Bryan assured. “There’s a lot of people that we owe a small amount of money. We’re going to try to pay off those...and then we’re going to try to give everybody a check for at least \$2000 so we have a square distribution across the board.” He noted that some circumstances, such as where people are waiting to collect funds owed to a deceased spouse or parent, make matters more complicated. However, “we’re going to try to get everything out by mid-May, so we could get these checks in people’s hands.”