

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Permanent Social Worker Arrives On St. Croix Offering Counseling, Other Services To Veterans

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Ernice Gilbert **October 22, 2015**



ST. CROIX -- The Office of Veterans Affairs announced on Wednesday via a Government House press release that a permanent social work had arrived on this island and will be providing critical services to veterans here.

According to the release, the social worker will be available Monday through Thursday weekly from 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at the veterans center here, located within the VA clinic in Barren Spot. Services to be provided include individual, family and group counseling. Other areas of assistance include:

- Financial or housing assistance

- Getting help from the VA or from community agencies, such as Meals on Wheels, so you can continue to live in your own home
- Applying for benefits from the VA, Social Security and other government and community programs
- Making sure your doctor and other VA staff on your treatment team know your decisions about end-of-life issues, generally called advance directives and living wills. Things like whether you want to be on life support equipment, whether you are an organ donor, and which family member or other person you have chosen to make decisions on your behalf when you are unable to make those decisions yourself
- Arranging for respite care for your caregiver so she or he can have a break or go on vacation without worrying about who will be caring for you
- If you would like help with moving to an assisted living facility, a board and care home or a nursing home.

"This comes to us at a time of great need," said Farrell D. Patrick, state director of the Officer of Veterans Affairs. "Before now, we had one VA social worker in the territory which caused that person to travel back and forth between districts, leaving either district at a lost at any given time. The veterans of this territory no longer have to wait for a social worker to be available because he or she is servicing another district," Mr. Farrell concluded.