

The Virgin Islands Consortium

About 100 Government Employees Were Not Paid On Thursday

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ST. CROIX -- About 100 government employees did not receive their government paychecks on Thursday, but Finance Commissioner Valdamier Collens assured that the situation would be remedied by today.

That's according to a press release issued by Senator Kenneth Gittens' office, with the senator stating that he was "disappointed" by the government's failure to meet its obligation of paying employees, even while being encouraged that Mr. Collens said the situation would soon be rectified.

"Thursday evening, I was advised by several employees from various department's including the Department of Labor that they were not paid," Mr. Gittens said. "I contacted Labor Commissioner Catherine Hendry who stated that she was aware and her staff is working on the problem. I further reached out to Finance Commissioner Collens who assured me that his staff has been working with respective agencies to make sure that the affected employees from various departments would be paid sooner than later."

The second-term Democrat added that it was not immediately known exactly how many employees were affected, but the number seems to be close to 100.

As for Mr. Collens, the commissioner was adamant that the nonpayment was not a result of lack of government funds to meet payroll obligations. He said the agencies with affected employees were required to update their "employee job salary record" and had not done so.

Senator Gittens said he implored each agency head to stay on top of their respective payroll staff in order to meet the Finance Department's Friday 11:00 a.m. deadline for a special midday check run that had been scheduled.

"Looking at this situation, time was of the essence to ensure that the deadline is met, especially in light of the long weekend as the territory observes David Hamilton Jackson Day, which is also known as Liberty Day. My heart goes out to those who were not paid Thursday and I am thanking Commissioner Collens and his staff for being sensitive to the situations and always being responsive when called upon."

Feature Image: Finance Commissioner Valdamier Collens

Image Credit: Government House.