

The Virgin Islands Consortium

DLCA To Banks: Stop Rejecting Voter's ID As Valid Proof Of Identification

VIC News / **Published On December 08, 2015 10:32 AM /**

Staff **December 08, 2015**



ST. CROIX -- The Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA) says it was recently made aware that certain business establishments in the territory are refusing to honor validly issued voter's identification cards as proof of identity of individual consumers.

That's according to a press release DLCA issued this afternoon, pinpointing financial establishments as the culprits.

According to the release, "certain" banks have been turning consumers away when they seek to do business, stating that voter registration cards are not accepted as a valid form

of identification in the Virgin Islands.

Title 18, Chapter 5 of the Virgin Islands Code sets forth stringent requirements for the procurement of voter's identification cards in the territory, according to the release. These strict requirements are in place to ensure the integrity and truth of information sought by those applying for a voter's identification card to vote in local elections.

Information provided to the Virgin Islands Elections System by a voter seeking to register to vote is sworn to under penalty of perjury punishable by incarceration, the release clarified. The information sought and provided is purposefully comprehensive and detailed in order that the Elections System can ascertain with as much certainty possible the identity of the individual seeking to register to vote in the Virgin Islands. The system also requires that official documents such as a certified birth certificate and/or passport, or naturalization certificate be presented to verify identity.

The release added: Only after this comprehensive registration system is completed, which includes sworn affidavits and the information provided is verified, does the applicant receive a Certificate of Registration (also known as a voter's identification card), that enables voter participation in the local elections. The process is as detailed or more detailed than the process required for a Virgin Islands issued driver's license.

It is for this reason that DLCA finds it very concerning that any business in the Virgin Islands would fail to honor a document that has the integrity to ensure one of the most sacred rights under the constitution, the right to vote, according to the release. Such an arbitrary decision works to the disadvantage of consumers, especially advanced-aged citizens who may have no need to renew their driver's license and/or passport. In fact, there are certain financial and other business establishments in the Virgin Islands that honor the voter's identification card as a valid form of identification. It is honored by the United States Post Office as well. Moreover, some jurisdictions in the United States recognize this government issued document as valid proof of identification.

DLCA says its urging establishments territory-wide to be consumer friendly and recognize the Virgin Islands issued voter's identification card as valid proof of an individual's identification.

The release did not identify the banks that have so far refused to accept voter's ID card as proper identification.