

The Virgin Islands Consortium

There Is \$600,000 In Child Support Monies Waiting To Be Distributed; But Custodial Parents Proving Hard To Find

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ST. THOMAS -- The Virgin Islands Department of Justice today made known through a brief conference call with reporters that there is roughly \$600,000 in unclaimed child support funds that need to be distributed, and the department is using all avenues it can to get the word out.

Mr. Walker, who noted that most of the unclaimed funds are for mothers, said D.O.J. is having a difficult and tedious time locating these parents, especially those who may have changed their addresses.

"Some of these persons may have moved off island, and we're trying to locate them because there are funds they're owed," Mr. Walker added.

The attorney general also said that some of the funds owed were considerable amounts, with the single biggest payment, at this time, being about \$5,000. Mr. Walker added that upon learning about the balance, he immediately signaled to his staff his desire to release the funds swiftly.

"It's all part of our Operation Support Our Children initiative in terms of getting the funds out immediately -- as soon as possible," Mr. Walker said.

There are 130 persons on the list that are owed the \$600,000, Mr. Walker revealed, stating that the list would be released to the media soon. The attorney general also said that D.O.J. has been working on updating its Operation Support our Children initiative with new figures. During his State of the Territory address, Governor Kenneth Mapp [commended](#) Mr. Walker and D.O.J. employees for collecting some \$1.8 million in four months following the launch of the initiative.

"This is unprecedented," Mr. Mapp declared during his address. "The Department of Justice will continue to work to recover as much as is owed to the children and their struggling single parents," he added.

And collection is critical, Mr. Walker continued, because if the money is not distributed after a period of time, it goes through a protracted process and wind up being owned by the Government of the Virgin Islands. Mr. Walker said such an outcome is a scenario he wants to steer away from, which is why they're pushing to release the funds to their rightful owners.

As for other initiatives go locate custodial parents, Director of Paternity and Child Support Charlotte Poole-Davis said D.O.J. has been looking into utilizing the Federal Parent Locator Service, which was developed in cooperation with states, employers, federal agencies, and the judiciary to help state and local child support agencies locate case participants.

For information on how to collect unclaimed child support money, contact the D.O.J. through [here](#).