

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Average Increase For Gov't Employees Seeing Raises Is \$4875 Annually; Teachers To Be Addressed In June

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ST. CROIX -- Employees of ten departments and agencies of the executive branch of government will receive increases in their pay on Thursday, Government House said via press release late Monday. The updated number adds the Office of the Inspector General to the list, which was not present in the [late-Sunday announcement](#). According to the release, these employees will see an annual average pay increase of \$4875. When adding fringe benefits, the increases will be higher, according to Government House.

Along with the O.I.G., employees who work in the following departments will see their salaries increase on Thursday, according Division of Personnel Director Milton

Potter: Department of Finance, Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs, Department of Tourism, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Department of Planning and Natural Resources-Enforcement Officers, Division of Personnel and Virgin Islands Fire Service.

"Many public employees are seeing a raise in pay for the first time in over 8 years ," Governor Kenneth Mapp said. "I am truly pleased that my administration, working with members of the Legislature are able to put much needed money in the hands of our employees."

Mr. Potter said the lump sum retroactive payments for these raises, effective January 1, 2016 would be included in the June 9, 2016 payroll for these departments.

The Department of Education, which employs the bulk of the territory's teachers, was not included on this list, but the release says increases relative to D.O.E., Human Services and the Bureau of Corrections will be forthcoming on June 9 and 23. The release did not specify which department would see increases on either of the dates.

The Mapp administration's relationship with teachers hit a bump following confusing signals coming from Government House. When salary increases were [first announced for educators](#), there seemed to be no strings attached. But Mr. Mapp later told The Consortium that [teachers were being asked to forego retroactive pay](#) as part of negotiations to see their step increases. Teachers, however, bucked, leading educators on St. Thomas to stage a [one-day strike](#), effectively shuttering the public school system in Charlotte Amalie.

Government House later tried to clarify through the Office of Collective Bargaining's Chief Negotiator, Natalie Tang How, but those efforts turned out [with incertitude](#) as well. The governor would later [chastise teachers](#), stating that he had lost enthusiasm to give them salary increases, contending that their actions left him baffled. He also reiterated that he would not negotiate with a gun to his head, after [first making the statement](#) a day following the teachers' job action here.