

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Financial Crisis: V.I.P.D. Drastically Cuts Overtime Hours

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Ernice Gilbert **February 28, 2017**



Police Commissioner Delroy Richards

The Virgin Islands Police Department has drastically cut its overtime operation, a document outlining the directive -- which was signed by V.I.P.D. Commissioner Delroy Richards and obtained by The Virgin Islands Consortium, has revealed.

The heavy reduction in overtime for the force comes as Governor Kenneth Mapp [warned](#) that because of the fiscal crisis facing the territory, austerity measures throughout government would be employed. Mr. Mapp had stressed during his press conference on

Wednesday that the steps he outlined were only considerations. However, with the V.I.P.D.'s latest directive, it appears that some parts of the directive were already in motion.

Mr. Mapp said the administration was prepared to order the V.I.P.D. as well as the Bureau of Corrections and the Fire Service, to reduce all overtime outlay by 80 percent. "What that means is that there could be shifts where fire houses would not be manned for an 8-hour period, but the response would come from other fire houses that are opened and manned," he said. "It means that overtime and special operations in the police department could be somewhat curtailed because the level of overtime disbursement must be reduced. In addition, the Bureau of Corrections may have to look at the transfer of additional persons out of the territory from the penal institution, so that the staff that exists would be able to adequately cover the shifts for those prisoners that remain on duty."

The V.I.P.D. document explained that the reduction in overtime was initiated "due to the fiscal severity of the Virgin Islands Government," and that "all departments have been mandated to take austerity measures to reduce individual budgets."

Office of the Police COMMISSIONER DIRECTIVE		Review Date:	Effective Date: February 23, 2017	District: ALL	Reference:
		Subject: <u>OVERTIME</u>			Number: 2017-002
Amends:	Rescinds All previous related Directives	Distribution: Division, Bureau and Unit Heads			Page 1 of 4

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Directive is to establish a policy to reduce the amount of overtime used annually in excess of the Virgin Islands Police Department's allotment. Due to the fiscal severity of the Virgin Islands Government, all departments have been mandated to take austerity measures to reduce individual budgets. To that end, the following policy will be adapted forthwith.

All bi-weekly overtime will be reduced to individuals with a base salary of:

- \$40,000 and under, maximum overtime is 16 hours;
- \$40,001-\$55,000, maximum overtime is 14 hours;
- \$55,001-\$60,000, maximum overtime is 12 hours;
- \$60,001-\$65,000, maximum overtime is 10 hours;
- \$65,001 and over, maximum overtime is 8 hours.

II. Mandate

Because of the downturn in the economy and the financial deficit the Virgin Islands Government is experiencing, the Virgin Islands Police Department has again found itself in a financial crisis due to the abundance of overtime utilized.

In order to circumvent the possibility of payless paydays, furloughs, and/or potential lay-offs, the Virgin Islands Police Department must implement rigid measures to curtail the increase in overtime cost. Due to these serious revelations, the following policy will be adapted immediately.

All exceptional circumstances for overtime must be approved by the Deputy Chief, Chief or higher-ranking authority prior to working the overtime.

All individual officers' productivity results must be submitted to the Deputy Chiefs office for review in order to continue with overtime.

Captains, Lieutenants and Commander will not be allowed to work overtime and holidays without prior approval from the Deputy Chief, Chief or higher-ranking authority.

While it is understood that the Virgin Islands Police Department is one of the most critical entities within the territory, we are all aware, through various forms of media, of the current financial crisis facing the US mainland and the territory. It is imperative that our department make this difficult, yet proactive decision to be fiscally responsible while assuring that we maintain an adequate level of service to this community.

III. Order

Support Staff employees will discontinue working overtime. Any exception to this order must be approved prior to working by the Police Commissioner with proper justification.

All employees must punch in at their schedule work time.

All off duty employees must submit a schedule from their employer bi-weekly to avoid any scheduling conflict with the department.

Any authority that obligates, signs, or approves overtime in excess of these orders will be subject to disciplinary action.

Commanders will evaluate officers' productivity to determine their continued authorization to work overtime and must be responsible for the following below:

- A. Assign non-emergency service requests received near shift change to on-coming shift personnel;
- B. Use auxiliary and reserve officers/employees and volunteers where feasible to offset temporary personnel shortages/vacancies and meet specialized needs;
- C. Anticipate and manage workload requirements where reasonable to best utilize standard duty hours;
- D. Manage and coordinate vacation, leave and related requests to minimize manpower deficiencies;
- E. Ensure that officers who make arrests late in their shift receive available assistance to process prisoners as quickly as possible;
- F. Ensure that arresting officers in misdemeanor incidents conduct tests, take statements or witness any actions/procedures essential to prosecution so that only the officer will be needed to testify in court. Arrest reports should include only the minimum number of officers; those who were integral to the arrest and who must be subpoenaed in any subsequent court testimony; and
- G. Ensure that department overtime policy, rules and regulations and the particulars of any labor agreement are consistently adhered to by department personnel as they relate to overtime for court appearances, standby, travel time, training, holiday leave, vacations and related matters.

- Employees who alternate sick leave (or other paid leave) with overtime on a repetitive basis;
- Employees who work overtime at a certain time of day, day after day, when their schedule could possibly be altered to better accommodate the work time needs for their position
- Periodically review standby time.

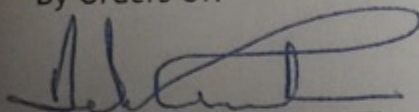
IV. Responsibility

This Directive affects all rank and file Officers of the Virgin Islands Police Department, civilian and enforcement.

Your strict adherence is required for the Virgin Islands Police Department to meet the requirement of law. Failure to follow the dictates of this directive will be grounds for initiation of disciplinary action.

All bureau heads, commanders, and supervisors shall ensure strict adherence to this directive. This directive *shall* also be read at all roll-call briefings for five (5) consecutive days.

By Orders Of:



Delroy Richards, Sr.
Police Commissioner

DATED THIS 23 DAY OF February, 2017

xc: Curtis A. Griffin, JD, Assistant Commissioner
Giselle Richardson-Jones, Administrator
Jason K. Marsh, Acting Chief of Police - St. Thomas/St. John District
Winsbut McFarlande, Acting Chief of Police - St. Croix District
Sandra Webster, Chief Financial Officer
Marjorie Macedon DeLugo, Director - Payroll Services
Dwayne Richards, Assistant Director - Human Resources
Chenelle Skepple, Acting Director - Internal Affairs
Ferdinand Reyes, Assistant Director - Planning, Research & Development
File

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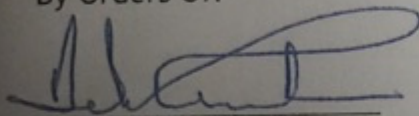
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All overtime worked shall be submitted on the departmental overtime justification form and approved for payment by the designated supervisor(s) and manager(s). The category of overtime work performed shall be coded in accordance with department personnel procedure and forwarded by unit commanders to the designated department unit for recording, accounting and analysis.

- A. Overtime expenditures shall be kept separately by function (e.g., briefings and roll calls, training, investigations) and by the department unit in which the expenditure is incurred. Individual and summary data will be compiled on a monthly basis.
- B. Overtime funds expended under federal or local grant programs will be accounted for separately from those in the general budget.

No Officer shall voluntarily report to any command to work overtime hours without prior authorization by the Commander of that Command, Section or Unit. In all instances, priority will be given to that Officers place of assignment before working in another Command, Section or Unit.

Chiefs of Police will ensure strict compliance with this directive.

Payroll Division shall be responsible for the following below:

- A. Conduct routine audits of the sections and individuals with the highest overtime to review compliance with policies and necessity of overtime reported. Review the supporting payroll documents for these employees.
- B. Conduct periodic audits of overtime worked for randomly selected employees, pull, and review supporting payroll documentation.
- C. Run queries and analyses of payroll data to look for overtime that does not comply with department policies.
- D. Run queries and analyses of payroll data to identify patterns that may indicate unnecessary overtime or overtime abuse, for instance:
 - Overtime worked every day by the same employees;
 - Employees consistently working overtime on certain days of the week;

Officers with an annually salary of \$40,000 and under will see their biweekly overtime work cut to 16 hours; those making between \$40,001 - \$55,000 annually, will receive 14 hours of biweekly overtime; officers with an annual salary of \$55,001 - \$60,000, will receive 12 hours of overtime work on a biweekly basis; those working for between \$60,001 - \$65,000 annually, will receive 10 hours of biweekly overtime; and those making \$65,001 and over, will receive 8 hours biweekly overtime work.

The drastic reduction in overtime for officers is the V.I.P.D.'s way of "circumventing" having to layoff or furlough employees, according to the document. In light of this, the document added that all "exceptional circumstances overtime must be approved by the deputy chief, chief or a higher ranking authority prior to working overtime." It says captains, lieutenants and commanders will not be allowed to work overtime hours on holidays without prior approval from one of the above mentioned authorities.

The reduction in overtime stands to affect the V.I.P.D.'s crime-fighting efforts, and may disrupt a positive streak on St. Croix, which has experienced only one homicide in 2017. In a recent interview with The Consortium following a [deadly shooting incident in St. Thomas](#), Police Commissioner Delroy Richards said the force was doing its best with its limited resources, stating that the V.I.P.D. lacked the manpower to "put officers on every corner."

The governor had mention 32nd Legislature senators during his press conference, a majority of whom [have so far supported his sin tax measure](#), stating that the implementation of the law would help in reducing the severity of the cutbacks.

"That's going to have an impact in terms of our overall plan because the measures that the Legislature is working on, if they're enacted in early March, then the revenues that we would expect between March 1 and September 30 would increase... the bridge would be reduced, hence the ability not to implement some of these more difficult reforms," the governor said.

The sin tax bill will face its final vote today, where a majority of Democrats are expected to approve the measure and forward it to Mr. Mapl for his signature.