

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Residents Have Much To Celebrate This Labor Day Weekend, Governor Mapp Says, Touting Wage Increase And Refinery Restart Deal

Business / **Published On September 02, 2018 10:32 AM /**

Staff **September 02, 2018**



Governor Kenneth Mapp said on Friday that rising public and private sector salaries and the rebuilding of a more resilient infrastructure are some of the many things Virgin Islanders have to celebrate this Labor Day.

"More people are now earning a living wage, and we're poised to dramatically improve the quality of life here in the Virgin Islands as we design and prepare to build new and improved roads, schools, ports and health care facilities," Mr. Mapp said.

On Thursday, nearly 800 more government workers took home a bigger paycheck and about 1,200 more will see salary increases later this month as a result of the governor's recent executive orders to increase the minimum wage for public sector workers to \$13 per hour and for the base salaries of teachers, social workers and other vital government workers to be significantly increased to retain and recruit a robust workforce.

Approximately 1,200 more executive branch employees will see raises reflected in their September paychecks. The Division of Personnel is processing Notifications of Personnel Action (NOPAs) documents daily and all affected employees will receive wage increases retroactive to August 1, 2018, according to Government House.

Mr. Mapp in 2016 approved a three-step measure that took the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$8.35 in 2016; from \$8.35 to \$ 9.50 on June 1, 2017; and from \$9.50 to \$10.50 on June 1, 2018.

"These salary hikes represent a victory for the hardworking women and men of this territory," Mr. Mapp said. "Wages remained stagnant for far too long. Lt. Governor Potter and I promised to increase salaries and we continue to deliver."

In 2016, the governor granted more than 3,000 public employees raises, averaging about \$5,000 each per annum. Many of these workers had not seen a salary increase in over a decade.

According to the release, the Mapp-Potter Administration also remains committed to creating new opportunities for all Virgin Islanders through economic development initiatives. In addition to hurricane recovery efforts, significant opportunities are now coming on line to include the oil refinery reopening and the racetrack rehabilitation projects.

The governor wished the people of the Virgin Islands a most enjoyable Labor Day weekend.

"As we continue to battle for the hardworking people of this territory, I hope you will find the opportunity this holiday weekend to relax and enjoy time with family and friends," he said.