

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Cost Of Living Increase Announced For Government Exempt Employees

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More than 1,200 non-union classified and exempt employees of the Virgin Islands Government will receive 3 percent cost of living salary increases retroactive to October 1, 2018, Government House announced Friday.

Governor Kenneth Mapp authorized the salary increases via executive order on Thursday evening. Executive Order 485-2018 notes that these employees were not included in prior executive orders granting raises and that many of these workers had not seen a salary increase in as long as eight years.

"It is about providing a living wage for all workers in the Virgin Islands," Mr. Mapp has said. "This administration remains committed to raising salaries and creating new jobs and economic opportunities in both the public and private sectors."

The order states that the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Proposal sent to the 32nd Legislature of the Virgin Islands provided for a 3 percent salary increase for Non-Union Classified employees and Exempt employees of the Executive Branch, Government House. No commissioners, assistant commissioners, directors nor assistant directors will receive the 3 percent increase, it added.

Government House said the latest executive order represents the Mapp-Potter administration's ongoing efforts to implement living wages in the territory. Mr. Mapp began authorizing raises in 2016 and, as of this month, 5,873 government workers have received salary hikes in addition to the 3 percent cost of living increases announced today.

Earlier this year, the governor announced a significant increase to the minimum base salary for police officers, teachers, firefighters, social workers and other vital public employees in order to recruit and retain a skilled workforce. He also ordered the minimum wage for all government workers to be raised to \$13 per hour. Additionally, the governor previously signed into law Act 8077 increasing the territory's private sector minimum wage.