

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Dept. of Justice Signs Contract With Firm To Improve Child Support Services In USVI

VIC News / **Published On July 08, 2019 11:25 PM /**

Staff **July 08, 2019**



The V.I. Department of Justice (D.O.J.) has announced that the Paternity and Child Support Division (PCSD) is in the process of significantly improving its child support services with the signing of a new contract with ProTech Solutions, Inc. – a nationwide information technology services provider for development, maintenance, and enhancement of automated systems – to manage the PCSD's Child Support Territorial Automated Reporting System (CSTARS) application.

According to the release, CSTARS, the automated case management system that supports the Title IV-D child support program in the U.S. Virgin Islands, has been operational since 2001. However, after years of being without a contract and updates,

the system fell into a state of delinquency and non-compliance with a number of child support systems requirements. As a result, the PCSD was being impeded from delivering efficient services to the many clients it serves and the financial needs of some of the territory's children were not being met.

Attorney General Denise N. George views this agreement between PCSD and ProTech as a welcomed relief for children and families who depend on child support payments, D.O.J. said.

"This modernization of our CSTARS system is the first step in our being able to provide better services to our clients, particularly the children of the Virgin Islands," Ms. George said. "The obsolete program, coupled with issues of critical staff shortages, created severe backlogs of child support cases, jeopardized meeting compliance requirements and diminished PCSD's ability to effectively process claims. This new upgrade marks a new beginning as we move towards rebuilding the PCSD to the optimum level of providing service to the children and families in our community and I commend the dedicated PCSD staff members who worked tirelessly to make this happen."

The government, through the Department of Property and Procurement, entered into a two-and-a-half-year covenant with ProTech Solutions, Inc., at a cost of \$4.5 million mandating ProTech to support the maintenance, upgrades, enhancements, modernization, and operation of CSTARS, D.O.J. said. The contract is effective from June 21 to Dec. 31, 2021.

On July 9, the PCSD will officially kick off its CSTARS Modernization Project with ProTech at PCSD's conference room at its Nisky Center offices on St. Thomas, according to the release.

The federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), an arm within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, developed automated systems, such as CSTARS, for child support enforcement to support states and territories in the development of comprehensive, statewide automated child support systems, according to its official website.