

The Virgin Islands Consortium

U.S. Attorney For Virgin Islands To Spearhead Disaster Fraud Training

VIC News / **Published On July 15, 2019 09:07 PM /**

Staff **July 15, 2019**



U.S. Attorney for the Virgin Islands Gretchen C.F. Shappert on Thursday will kick off a two-day training session for HUD Community Development and Block Grant – Disaster Recovery grantees, sub-grantees and contractors, and law enforcement agencies, the U.S. Attorney's Office made known via release Monday.

The training is being hosted in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General (HUD OIG). It will include presentations from staff from the Inspectors General of U.S. Department of Homeland Security and HUD. Representatives from HUD and the National Center for Disaster Fraud will also provide remarks, the release said.

The devastation impacted by Hurricanes Maria and Irma in the U.S. Virgin Islands resulted in disaster aid from the federal government of more than \$1.8 billion to date.

According to the release, this training will highlight HUD's disaster assistance program requirements, and risks, as well as, familiarize Virgin Islands' grant personnel and members of the law enforcement community on issues related to disaster fraud investigations.

"The investigation and prosecution of government programs fraud and procurement fraud are priorities of this U.S. Attorney's Office," Shappert said. "Taxpayers have every right to expect that fraudsters and scam artists will suffer the consequences of their criminal actions. We are grateful that HUD OIG has agreed to provide this valuable training in the USVI. This is a tremendous opportunity for prosecutors and law enforcement officers to study effective investigative techniques and to learn from one another."

"In developing these training forums, it is our objective to leverage the knowledge and expertise from many resources," said Lisa R. Gore, Special Agent in Charge for Disasters, HUD OIG. "It is our intent that these sessions offer jurisdictional specific awareness to staff on the ground and create the best learning opportunity available."

During the forum, attendees will hear speakers discuss: