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## 'Every Childcare Provider' in USVI Eligible for up to \$30,000 Mini Grant by Filing Out Short Application

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During a Department of Human Services budget hearing Monday, D.H.S. Commissioner Kimberly Causey-Gomez made known that “every single licensed child care provider [in the USVI] may apply for up to \$30,000” as part of a federal mini grant program. The only requirement is to fill out a short application, she said.

Encouraged by the news, Senator Kurt Vialet reiterated, “Let me put it out there, there’s \$30,000 in federal funds that child care providers can apply for and get.”

He added, “You are already in the system, apply for that \$30,000... we have to spend these federal funds or they are going to go back.”

Ms. Causey-Gomez stated, “It’s a great opportunity because if you want to pay your rent for a year you can, you want to buy a generator you can buy a generator, if you want to reinforce your PPEs or cleaning supplies, feel free to do so — if you want to do a new curriculum or buy tablets for your children that are in your facility, you want to upgrade security, there are so many options.”

Asst. D.H.S. Commissioner Carla Benjamin said the grant application would be uploaded to D.H.S.'s website. She also revealed an email was sent to child care providers alerting them of the grant opportunity, however not many have responded. Of the 172 licensed child care providers in the territory only ten have applied to date, according to Ms. Casuey-Gomez and Ms. Benjamin.

The commissioner added, “All they have to do is apply. There aren’t very many situations where an application would be denied. At the end of the process all they need to do is provide documentation to show that the money was spent in the way that they said they would.”