

The Virgin Islands Consortium

U.S. Attorney Announces \$400,000 Award For Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act in USVI

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U.S. Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert announced Monday that the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands has received a \$400,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice in support of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act.

The award from the DOJ's Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART) supports the vital work of V.I. Department of Justice (VIDOJ) efforts towards the implementation of SORNA initiatives, according to the release. SORNA requires convicted sex offenders to register in the states in which they live, work, or attend school, and it directs the Attorney General to issue regulations and guidelines to implement SORNA.

“Sex offender registrations and notification systems are critical in our efforts to diminish the continued victimization of children subjected to sexual abuse,” Shappert said. “Consistent with the law, convicted sex offenders are expected to comply with registration requirements. This process helps law enforcement protect our communities.”

According to the release, Congress enacted SORNA as part of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 to strengthen the nation's sex offender registration programs, which exist in every state, and to ensure that sex offenders are effectively tracked as they move among jurisdictions. SORNA includes requirements regarding the sex offenses for which registration is required and the information sex offenders must provide to registration authorities; reporting of changes in, and periodic verification of, residence and other information; and the required duration of registration for sex offenders in different classes. SORNA also requires sex offenders to report travel abroad, which addresses the global concern over international sex tourism and trafficking.

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs is a federal agency that provides federal leadership, grants, training, technical assistance and other resources to improve the nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime, assist victims and enhance the rule of law by strengthening the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Its six program offices support state and local crime-fighting efforts, fund thousands of victim service programs, help communities manage sex offenders, address the needs of youth in the system and children in danger, and provide vital research and data.

Learn more about the Sex Offender Notification Act at SORNA. For more information about DOJ's Office of Justice Programs, see www.ojp.gov/about.