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# D.O.H. Reminding Community of Available Funding For Funeral Expenses of Loved Ones Who Suffered Covid-Related Deaths

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The V.I. Dept. of Health has reminded the Virgin Islands community of the availability of federal dollars to help with funeral expenses for loved ones who died as a result of Covid-related complications.

In a release issued Sunday, D.O.H. said the Federal Emergency Management Agency Funeral Assistance Program "is part of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Under this Act, FEMA oversees funds earmarked to reimburse families for the funeral expenses of persons who died from Covid-19."

The department said its Division of Vital Records and Statistics has been reaching out to families of all persons in the territory who lost loved ones to Covid-19 since the program started accepting application in April 2021. "The DOH Division has provided and will continue to provide the necessary information on the funeral assistance program's procedures and requirements as well as provide the proper forms and death certificates required to complete the reimbursement process," stated the release.

Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion said, "The Division of Vital Records and Statistics has stood ready to assist individuals who lost loved ones to COVID-19 since this program began last year. I urge anyone who has lost someone to Covid-19 and has had to endure the financial challenges posed by the high cost of a funeral to consider the reimbursement program."

For information or assistance, contact Lorraine Benjamin-Matthew, the director of the Division of Vital Records and Statistics at [lorraine.benjamin-matthew@doh.vi.gov](mailto:lorraine.benjamin-matthew@doh.vi.gov), or by phone at 340-474-9749. Additional information can also be obtained by visiting the DOH website [here](#).

To learn more about the FEMA Funeral Assistance Program, go [here](#), or call 1-844-684-6333.

Residents are also reminded that all funeral homes in the territory provide information relative to the benefits and requirements of the FEMA Funeral Assistance Program.