

Retroactive Wage Payouts to Commence September 30

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The V.I. Division of Personnel announced Monday that retroactive payments owed to the employees and retirees of the Government of the Virgin Islands, based on Act. 6984, are anticipated to be distributed by September 30, 2022.

According to the release, on Thursday, August 31, 2022, the 34th Legislature passed proposed legislation, Bill No. 34-0289 – an act amending Act. 8474 relating to fiscal year 2022 operating budget for the Government of the Virgin Islands to appropriate the sum of \$40,000,000 to pay outstanding retro payments from the General Fund in the fiscal year. All eligible recipients will be receiving a 22.8% payout based on the current balance owed.

An amendment by Senator Donna Frett-Gregory authorized the payment of the retroactive wages for government employees on an equal percentage basis. During testimony at the Aug. 30 Senate session, Office of Management and Budget Director Jenifer O'Neal stated that the plan was to pay

the \$40 million retroactive payment out at a flat \$3,700. This methodology, while expedient is not fair or effective because all retroactive payments are not equal as it relates to amounts owed, said Ms. Frett-Gregory. With the adoption of amendment 34-620, those owed will be paid at an equal percentage and are expected to receive approximately 22.8% of their retroactive wages.

Amendment 34-620 aligns the payment method to that of 2010 which paid an equal percent, 16.7%, of the amount owed to affected individuals. With this payment the overall percentage paydown will total 39.5% with approximately 60.5% remaining to be paid. During the FY23 budget markup, Ms. Frett-Gregory pledged to work with her colleagues to appropriate funds to continue to pay down the retroactive wages.

Ms. Frett-Gregory also requested that the directors of the Division of Personnel and OMB revisit the \$10 million retroactive wage appropriation for retirees 65 and over and pay the approximately \$2.8 million remaining on an equal percentage rate basis.

According to Personnel, all eligible recipients such as — active GVI employees, separated GVI employees, retirees, or survivors' — can view their for anticipated gross payout by visiting the 2022 Retroactive Wage Distribution Portal on Division of Personnel's website at www.dopusvi.org/retro.

Personnel said if you are an active GVI employee who is currently on the central government payroll, you will receive your payment via direct deposit. Separated employees and retirees owed retroactive compensation, will have to complete a direct deposit form by September 20, 2022. However, if you prefer a physical check, your information in the Employee Self Service system must be updated. For assistance accessing your ESS account, email us at dophelpdesk@dop.vi.gov or call 340-714-5010.

Survivors of an active, separated GVI employee or retiree, are applicable to receiving retroactive payments, please visit the website for further instructions to provide necessary documents to complete processing, according to the release.

"Please note that there are frequently asked questions (FAQs) available on the website. We highly encourage you to visit the www.dopsusvi.org/retro for all your informational needs regarding Retroactive Wage Payouts," Personnel said.

If you should have any further questions or concerns, email retro@dop.vi.gov. "Our dedicated hotline (340) 714-5010, will also be available, to speak to a V.I. Division of Personnel representative who can verify information and begin the process of finalizing payments," Personnel said.

"We appreciate your cooperation and patience during this distribution period, as we continue to work diligently to ensure that all entitled and deserving recipients receive his or her funds, both efficiently and timely," the department added.