

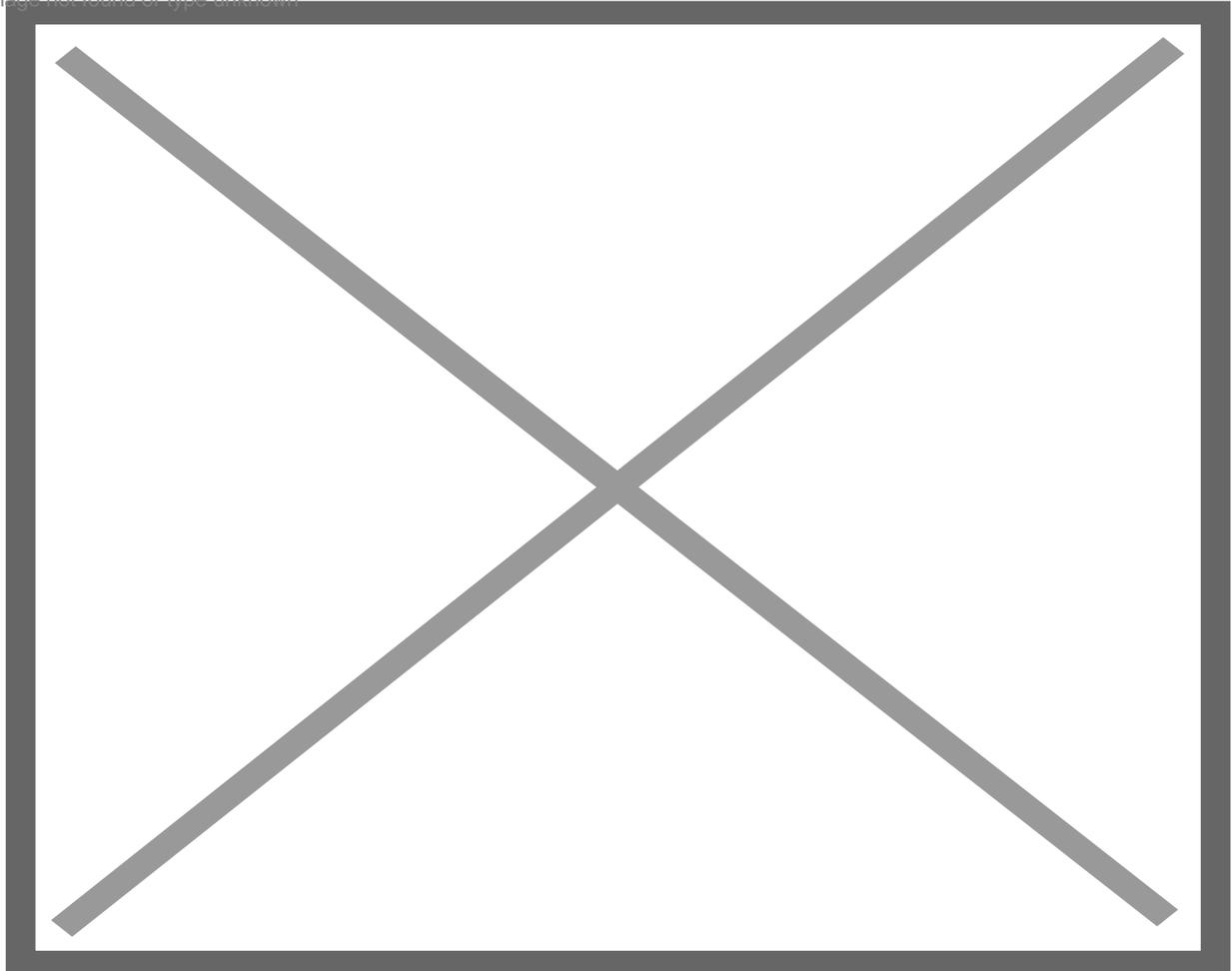
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Veterans Affairs Now Covering Travel Costs for USVI Veterans Seeking Care on U.S. Mainland

Crime / **Published On November 06, 2022 05:19 AM /**

Staff Consortium **November 06, 2022**

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Virgin Islands veterans who want to seek medical care at VA facilities on the U.S. mainland will now receive financial help to purchase the tickets for their travel, according to the V.I. Office of Veterans Affairs.

USVI VA Director Patrick Farrell said the VA will cover up to \$250 in travel costs each time a veteran from the USVI wants to seek medical care in the U.S., for a total of three trips per year.

While eligible veterans can access medical care at any VA medical facility in the United States or its territories, the USVI does not have a local VA Medical Center — only outpatient clinics in St. Thomas and St. Croix — with the closest VA Medical Center being located in Puerto Rico.

“For a very long time, Veterans in the Virgin Islands have expressed an interest in being able to travel to the mainland to attend VA medical appointments. To address these concerns, the Office of Veterans Affairs will be subsidizing the plane ticket of any Veteran seeking to attend VA Medical appointments on the mainland,” Mr. Farrell said in a Saturday release. “Veterans will be allowed subsidy for no more than 3 trips per fiscal year (October 1 – 30 September) at a rate of up to \$250 per trip. We asked that Veterans wishing to take advantage of this benefit first contact the V.I. Office of Veterans Affairs for pre-approval. Any request made after travel is not guaranteed to be approved.”

Mr. Farrell is encouraging those with questions to contact the local VA Office at (340) 774-8387 or (340) 773-8387.

Veterans can also receive up-to-date information by visiting the Office of Veterans Affairs website at www.veterans.vi.gov, calling the office (340) 774/ 773 - 8387, or by texting the word VIVets (no spaces) to 888-652-8387.

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