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Marijuana Sales, Consumption in Public Places and Other Uses Remain Illegal in USVI, Bryan Administration Reminds as it Clarifies Cannabis Law

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The Bryan administration has issued a press release aimed at clarifying the status of marijuana use in the U.S. Virgin Islands, stating that while Governor Bryan signed into law the legal use of cannabis for recreational, sacramental and other purposes, until certain steps and actions are implemented, the drug remains illegal in the territory.

Mr. Bryan signed into law the Virgin Islands Cannabis Use Act (Act 8680) on Jan. 18. Aside from the legalization of use in several categories, it also provides additional economic opportunities for Virgin Islanders and will create additional revenue for the Government of the Virgin Islands, according to Government House.

However, a number of steps and actions by the Office of Cannabis Regulations – including the development and finalization of Rules and Regulations governing the cannabis industry in the territory – must take place before the new law can be fully enacted, Government House said.

"Until then, the use and sale of cannabis remains prohibited under the V.I. Code," the administration made known Thursday afternoon.

Cannabinoid Hemp products are currently allowed under the law including:

- Hemp-derived cannabinoids including CBD, CBN, or THC (less than 0.03%);
- Hemp products;
- The commercial cultivation of hemp, licensed through the V.I. Department of Agriculture; and
- The sale of Hemp Products, licensed through the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs.

In addition, simple possession of cannabis has been decriminalized throughout the territory.

Among the steps necessary to fully enact the Cannabis Use Act are:

- Completing the rules and regulations, which are then reviewed by the Cannabis Advisory Board and submitted to the Virgin Islands Department of Justice.
- Upon approval by the Department of Justice, the rules and regulations are forwarded to the public for review and input before being voted on by the Cannabis Advisory Board and sent to the Governor for his signature.
- After the Office of Cannabis Regulation implements the rules and regulations, the public may begin to use and sell cannabis and its derivatives within the requirements of the rules and regulations.

Until and when that process is completed, the following restrictions remain in effect throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands:

- Possession of cannabis or its concentrates up to 1 ounce would create a fine of \$100.
- Private consumption of cannabis, cannabis sales.
- Adult Use, Medicinal Patient Use, and Sacramental Use of cannabis is prohibited.
- Cannabis sales activity is prohibited.
- Transporting and distributing cannabis is prohibited.

According to Government House, once the governor signs the approved Rules and Regulations enacting the Cannabis Use Act, the following activities will remain prohibited under the V.I. Code:

- Possession and consumption of cannabis at all federal facilities.
- Public consumption of cannabis.
- Personal transportation of cannabis between islands.

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