

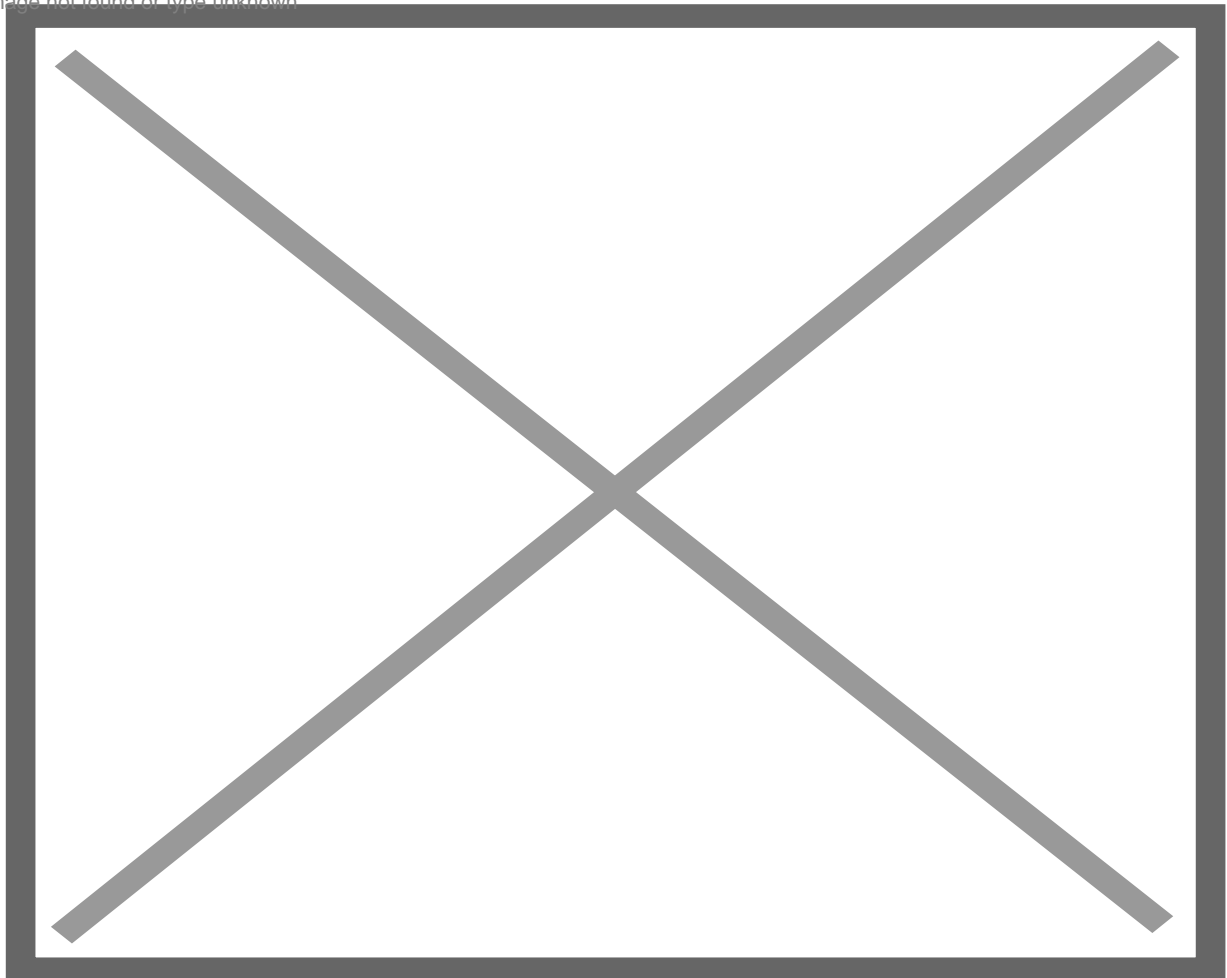
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V.I. Dept. of Health Receives \$33.5 Million From FEMA in Covid Response Reimbursement for July 2022-February 2023 Period

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Staff Consortium **May 05, 2023**

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency has announced an additional \$33.5 million Public Assistance grant to the U.S. Virgin Islands, aimed at reimbursing the territory for emergency medical services provided during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The funds will be allocated to the V.I. Department of Health for contracting emergency medical services, including ambulances, personnel, equipment, and supplies, to assist with the Covid-19 response from July 2, 2022, through February 28, 2023.

FEMA Virgin Islands Caribbean Area Office Coordinator, Mark A. Walters, expressed pride in FEMA's partnership with the territory, which he said led to "unified efforts that supported

lifesaving and life-sustaining measures during a challenging time for the U.S. Virgin Islands and the nation." Walters added that FEMA initially supported the territory's Covid-19 response in March 2020 and had since been committed to mitigating the spread of the virus.

According to FEMA, Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion shared her elation at the news of the additional funds, stating that the services rendered were "a valuable and vital asset in the Territory's response to Covid." Encarnacion also praised the FEMA team for their ongoing collaboration and support in the face of both manmade and natural disasters.

As of May 3, 2023, FEMA has committed a total of \$146.1 million to the U.S. Virgin Islands for Covid-19 response reimbursement. This support includes funding and technical assistance for vaccine centers, emergency operations centers, personal protective equipment (PPE), medical care surge build-outs, staffing, testing, and emergency response.

FEMA's Public Assistance Program offers supplemental grants to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, as well as certain types of private nonprofits, to help communities rapidly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies.

For more information on the Public Assistance Program, visit www.fema.gov/assistance/public. To learn more about the COVID-19 response in the U.S. Virgin Islands, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4513 and www.covid19usvi.com.