

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, VETERANS
AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

05/30/2025-REASSIGNED TO THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGET, APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCE

BILL NO. 36-0053

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

March 28, 2025

An Act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 25, subchapter V, section 555b to increase the minimum annual salary for full time employees of the Government of the Virgin Islands, its semi-autonomous agencies and independent instrumentalities from \$27,040 to \$32,000

PROPOSED BY: Senators Kurt A. Violet, Hubert L. Frederick, Avery L. Lewis and
Franklin D. Johnson
Co-sponsor: Ray Fonseca

1 **WHEREAS**, the Government of the Virgin Islands recognizes the necessity of ensuring
2 that full-time employees receive fair and competitive wages that reflect the economic realities
3 of the Territory;

4 **WHEREAS**, the current minimum salary for full-time employees of the Government of
5 the Virgin Islands, semi-autonomous agencies, and independent instrumentalities is \$27,040
6 per annum, which has not kept pace with the rising cost of living in the Territory;

7 **WHEREAS**, the cost of living in the Virgin Islands is significantly higher than in many
8 states and jurisdictions within the continental United States, particularly in the areas of housing,
9 groceries, and utilities;

1 **WHEREAS**, the cost of groceries in the Virgin Islands is substantially higher than the
2 national average, with food prices often exceeding those on the U.S. mainland due to import
3 costs, supply chain limitations, and logistical expenses;

4 **WHEREAS**, the cost of housing in the Virgin Islands, including rent and homeownership
5 expenses, remains disproportionately high compared to many areas in the continental United
6 States, making it increasingly difficult for government employees to afford stable housing
7 within the Territory;

8 **WHEREAS**, the cost of electricity in the Virgin Islands is among the highest in the
9 United States and the Caribbean, with residents and businesses paying significantly more per
10 kilowatt-hour than their counterparts in the mainland U.S. and many neighboring jurisdictions,
11 further exacerbating the financial burden on government employees;

12 **WHEREAS**, high energy costs, combined with increasing prices for other essential
13 goods and services, continue to place significant economic strain on workers, impacting their
14 quality of life and financial stability;

15 **WHEREAS**, increasing the minimum salary from \$27,040 per annum to \$32,000 per
16 annum will provide necessary economic relief to employees and help them better manage the
17 cost of living, and support their financial security;

18 **WHEREAS**, this wage adjustment aligns with the Government of the Virgin Islands'
19 commitment to fostering a sustainable workforce, enhancing employee retention, and ensuring
20 that all public sector employees receive compensation that reflects economic conditions and
21 inflationary trends, Now, Therefore,

22 ***Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands***

23 **SECTION 1.** Title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 25, subchapter V, section 555b is
24 amended by:

(1) striking each instance of “27,040” and inserting “32,000” in its place; and

(2) inserting a comma between “Government of the Virgin Islands” and “semi-autonomous agencies” in each instance where it appears.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect October 1, 2026.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill amends title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 25, subchapter V, section 555b by increasing the minimum salary for full time employees of the Virgin Islands Government, its semi-autonomous agencies and independent instrumentalities from \$27,040 to \$32,000 per year.

BR25-0198/January 26, 2025/PFA