

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HOSPITALS AND HUMAN
SERVICES

BILL NO. 36-0051

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

March 28, 2025

An Act amending title 27 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 20 by establishing the Virgin Islands Board of Social Work Licensure

PROPOSED BY: Senator Novelle E. Francis, Jr.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. Title 27 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 20 is amended by adding the following sections 546 and 547:

“§ 546. Board of Social Work Licensure

(a) There is established the Virgin Islands Board of Social Work Licensure within the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs. The Board consists of five members appointed by the Governor of the Virgin Islands with the advice and consent of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands. Not less than two members must be a licensed master’s social worker or licensed clinical social worker, one member must be a licensed social worker, one member who may be a licensed social worker, a licensed master’s social worker, or licensed clinical social worker and one member of the public who has never been licensed under this chapter. At all times, there must be not less than two members who are residents of the district of St. Croix, and not less than two members who are residents of the district of St. Thomas and St. John, one of whom must reside on St. John.

(b) The term of office of each member of the Board is three years; but of the members first appointed, two must be appointed for a term of two years, two must be appointed for a term of three years, and one must be appointed for a term of four years. Each member of the Board shall continue to serve until a successor is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Legislature. If the Board lacks a quorum, which consists of not less than three members, the Commissioner shall assume the administrative functions of the Board until a quorum is restored. However, the Commissioner has no voting power and is not an ex-officio member of the Board.

(c) Members of the Board may be removed by the Governor for cause.

(d) The organization, meetings, and management of the Board must be established in regulations promulgated by the Board.

(e) The Board, its members, and its designated agents—including legal counsel, consultants, and employees authorized to act on behalf of the Board—are immune from personal liability for actions taken in good faith in the discharge of the Board’s responsibilities. The Government of the Virgin Islands shall hold the Board, its members, and its designated agents harmless from all costs, damages, and attorneys’ fees arising from claims and suits against them in the discharge of those responsibilities.

§ 547. Duties of the Board

In addition to the duties set forth elsewhere in the chapter, the Board shall:

(1) annually publish a list of the names and addresses of all persons who are licensed under this chapter;

(2) promulgate regulations that set standards for professional practice, establish the procedure for the licensure, eligibility, continuing education, supervision and examination for social work associates, licensed social workers, licensed master’s social workers, and licensed

clinical social workers and that provides for administration of, and to carry out the purposes of this chapter;

(3) recommend to the Governor and the Legislature modifications and amendments to this chapter;

(4) recommend to the Virgin Islands Government, Division of Personnel, standards of professional practice for persons licensed under this chapter;

(5) recommend prosecutions for violations of this chapter to the Attorney General of the Virgin Islands;

(6) recommend to the Attorney General of the Virgin Islands the bringing of civil actions, to seek injunctions, or other relief for violations of this chapter; and

(7) take the necessary action to enforce the provisions of this chapter and to regulate the practice of social work.

SECTION 2. The Governor of the Virgin Islands shall nominate members to the Board of Social Work Licensure not later than 60 days after the effective date of this act.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill creates the Virgin Islands Board of Social Work Licensure and set forth some of its duties.

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