

**VIRGIN ISLANDS
JUDICIAL MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-0001

**COMMENDING THE HONORABLE DENISE M. FRANCOIS FOR
HER SERVICE TO THE JUDICIAL BRANCH OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS**

WHEREAS, the Honorable Denise M. Francois was born in Washington, D.C. but returned to the Virgin Islands with her family and attended both Saints Peter and Paul Catholic School and Antilles School before completing her last 2 years of high school at Berkshire School in Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, upon graduation from high school, Judge Francois was in the first class of women admitted to Amherst College in Massachusetts, where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science in 1980, before returning to the Virgin Islands where she spent time working as an Investigator in the Department of Social Welfare's Paternity and Child Support Division and as an Economist at the Department of Commerce's Division of Policy Planning and Research; and pursuing a Juris Doctor from the University of San Diego School of Law which she in earned in 1984; and

WHEREAS, Judge Francois enrolled in the University of San Diego School of Law, and not only worked as a law clerk for a firm in San Diego specializing in construction litigation, but spent her summers interning with the Law Office of Maria Tankenson Hodge, P.C.;

WHEREAS, upon graduation from law school, Judge Francois passed the California bar exam and returned to St. Thomas to work as an Associate Attorney in the Law Office of Maria Tankenson Hodge, P.C. from 1984 until 1991, when she became a Partner and Managing Attorney for the Law Offices of Hodge and Francois from 1991 until 2013; and

WHEREAS, Judge Francois is admitted to the practice of law in the state of California, United States Virgin Islands, District Court of the Virgin Islands and Third Circuit of Appeals, and has been a member of the American Bar Association, the Association of Trial Lawyers and American Association for Justice, and experience as a Certified Mediator; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of her capacity, skills, and capabilities as a practicing attorney for nearly 30 years in the Virgin Islands, she was nominated in 2013 by Governor John P. DeJongh Jr. and confirmed by the 30th Legislature of the Virgin Islands to serve a 6-year term as a judge in the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands for the District of St. Thomas and St. John; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of her diligence as a Superior Court judge, Governor Albert A. Bryan Jr. nominated Judge Francois in 2020 to serve a second 6-year term as a judge of the

Superior Court of the Virgin Islands in the District of St. Thomas and St. John; a position to which she was subsequently confirmed by the 34th Legislature of the Virgin Islands; and


WHEREAS, Judge Francois has served as a member of the Judicial Management Advisory Council since 2022, and the inaugural chairperson of the Rules Advisory Committee and under whose leadership recommendations for Virgin Islands Rules of Civil Procedure were adopted and promulgated; and

WHEREAS, Presiding Judge Jessica Gallivan designated Judge Francois to serve as the Administrative Judge of the Superior Court effective on September 11, 2025;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Judicial Branch of the Virgin Islands congratulates Judge Francois on her designation as Administrative Judge of the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands and expresses its utmost gratitude for her dedication and continued service in the judiciary and her willingness to serve as Administrative Judge.

DULY ADOPTED by the Judicial Management Advisory Council at a duly noticed meeting on April 10, 2026.


Rhys S. Hodge, Chief Justice - Chair

ATTEST:

Regina D. Petersen, Secretary

