COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY, JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

10/22/2026-AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE FLOOR
10/15/2026-REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICIARY

BILL NO. 36-0338

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

July 31, 2026

An act amending title 5 Virgin Islands Code, section 31 (a) by changing the commencement of actions for personal bodily injury

PROPOSED BY: Senator Franklin D. Johnson
Sponsors: Clifford A. Joseph, Sr., and Avery L. Lewis
Co-sponsor: Ray Fonseca

WHEREAS, statutes of limitations establish the periods within which civil actions must be commenced after the causes of action accrue, subject to applicable exceptions;

WHEREAS, title 5 Virgin Islands Code, section 31(a)(5)(A), generally establishes a two-year limitations period for actions for injury to the person or rights of another not arising on contract and not otherwise specifically enumerated in that section;

WHEREAS, the geographical location of the Virgin Islands and limitations in the availability of certain specialized medical services may require persons who suffer serious injuries in the territory to travel outside the territory for medical treatment and rehabilitation;

WHEREAS, persons undergoing extensive medical treatment and rehabilitation outside the territory may face additional practical difficulties in obtaining legal representation,

gathering necessary information, and commencing civil actions within the applicable limitations period;

WHEREAS, John B. Williams, a Virgin Islander, suffered catastrophic, life-altering injuries in a motor vehicle collision involving a visiting tourist;

WHEREAS, Mr. Williams required emergency medical evacuation from the territory for specialized treatment and sustained permanent physical disabilities requiring the use of a wheelchair and walker;

WHEREAS, during Mr. Williams' extended treatment and recovery outside the territory, the applicable limitations period expired, preventing him from pursuing a civil action for compensation for his injuries and related medical expenses; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of Mr. Williams' experience and the challenges faced by other injured persons in the Virgin Islands, the Legislature finds that extending the limitations period for actions for battery or bodily or physical injury to four years will provide additional time to pursue civil remedies; Now, Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. Title 5 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 3, section 31(a), is amended as follows:

(1) redesignate subsections (4), (5), and (6) as subsections (5), (6), and (7);

(2) insert the following new subsection (4):

'(4) Four years—

(A) An action for battery or for bodily or physical injury to the person.'; and

(3) in paragraph (6)(A), as redesignated—

(A) strike 'battery,'; and

(B) insert ‘non-bodily or non-physical’ immediately before ‘injury’.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill amends title 5 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 3, section 31, subsection (a)(4) by changing the commencement of actions for personal bodily injury from two years to four years.

BR26-1085/July 1, 2026/CBM

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