



**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802
340-774-0001**

EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 540-2025

**TO PRESCRIBE AND ESTABLISH A CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR
OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS**

WHEREAS, the observance and maintenance of the highest standards of ethical conduct by all those who represent it is essential to the well-being and integrity of Government; and

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) to ensure that its officers and employees conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the public trust and reflects the highest standards of ethics and integrity; and

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon those who serve the people in the Government Service, and especially those who occupy positions of great trust and responsibility, to set an example of high ethical and moral standards; and

WHEREAS, the Government of the USVI seeks to establish clear guidelines regarding the ethical responsibilities, personal conduct, and prohibited activities of its officers and employees to maintain the integrity of the government; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the executive branch of the Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI) to accept and continue in the Government Service only those who, by their performance and conduct, strengthen the moral fiber of the Government;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me by section 11 of the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands, I amend the code of Ethical Conduct prescribed and established for officers and employees of the executive branch of the Government of the Virgin Islands, as follows:

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 53-1961 is hereby repealed and replaced accordingly.

SECTION 1: SCOPE: This order shall apply to all officers and employees of the executive branch of the government of the Virgin Islands, including classified and unclassified employees, appointed officials, temporary and contractual employees.

SECTION 2: PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES: The purpose of this Order is to prescribe and establish within the executive branch of the government of the Virgin Islands, certain basic principles and standards of ethical conduct which the Government requires to be observed in the handling of its affairs, and which the people of the Virgin Islands demand of any public servant in order to preserve

the highest level of integrity, professionalism, and public trust in the Government Service. The government of the Virgin Islands strives to be just in all its dealings and its agents must be just in all those dealings.

The good intentions or demonstrable virtue of an officer or employee shall be no defense in any instance where such officer or employee, by their conduct, brings the integrity of the GVI into question. The Government does not and will not tolerate the performance or conduct of any officer or employee based on personal pecuniary considerations, on the one hand, or on the other, on any mistaken concept of “leaning over backwards” to prevent the exposure or appearance of any such private interest. The people of the Virgin Islands deserve and demand every confidence that government officers and employees are faithfully devoted to the public interest and motivated solely by the public interest. Accordingly, this order is designed to prohibit and proscribe activities, attitudes, or conduct on the part of any officer or employee of the government, including the acceptance of gifts, gratuities, personal gain, or promises of the same, or expected benefit to family or friends, political or otherwise, under any circumstances where acceptance or expectation may result in, or create the appearance of resulting in:

- A) Use of public office for private gain; and
- B) An undertaking to give preferential treatment to any person/entity; and
- C) Impeding government efficiency or economy; and
- D) Any loss of complete independence/impartiality; and
- E) The making of a government decision through official channels; and
- F) Any adverse effect on the confidence of the public in the integrity of the Government.

SECTION 3: GOOD FAITH: All officers and employees are required to carry out and execute in good faith the established policies and programs of the Government. While officers and employees retain all political rights and freedoms of all other American citizens, they must not let personal views influence, compromise, frustrate, impede or distort the decisions, actions, or responsibilities they perform in their official capacity. Personal political opinions should not impact the impartiality or effectiveness of government operations.

SECTION 4: PERSONAL CONDUCT: The personal and private conduct of all officers and employees, which adversely reflects upon the dignity and prestige of the Government, will not be tolerated. All officers and employees of the USVI government are expected to conduct themselves with the highest ethical standards, both professionally and personally, to preserve the public's confidence in government operations. Accordingly, all officers and employees must adhere to, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. **Maintaining Professionalism** - Officers and employees must avoid conduct in professional and private life that could adversely affect public perception, tarnish the reputation of the government or diminish public trust.
- b. **Social Media and Public Statements** - Officers and employees must exercise caution when making public statements, particularly on social media, which could be construed as presenting the government's views and avoid making derogatory, inflammatory, or offensive comments that could reflect negatively on the government,
- c. **Substance Abuse and Illegal Activities** - Officers and employees must refrain from using or abusing illegal substances and intoxicants or engaging in illegal activities. Officers or

employees who habitually use intoxicants are subject to removal/dismissal. Gambling while on duty is strictly prohibited.

- d. **Personal Financial Responsibility** - Officers and employees are expected to honor their financial commitments. While the Government is not a collection agency for the debts of its officers and employees, the conduct of such officers or employees, with respect to private financial matters evidencing a pattern of irresponsibility, should be regarded as contrary to the good of government service and a violation of this order.

SECTION 5: ETHICAL PRINCIPLES/STANDARDS: All officers and employees shall observe the following core ethical principles in their professional conduct:

1. **Integrity:** Officers and employees shall conduct all activities with honesty and moral uprightness, ensuring actions align with the highest ethical standards. Officers and employees must avoid situations that create conflicts of interest, compromise or appear to compromise their professional integrity as well as the integrity of the government.
2. **Accountability:** Officers and employees shall take full responsibility for actions, decisions, and the use of public resources. Officers and employees must be prepared to explain and justify their decisions and conduct, both internally to peers and management and to the public when applicable and accept the consequences of their actions, whether positive or negative.
3. **Transparency:** Officers and employees shall maintain openness in government operations and decision-making processes and provide accurate and timely information to the public, except where confidentiality is required by law or policy. Officers and employees must ensure that the decision-making process is clear and accessible to the public when appropriate.
4. **Impartiality:** Officers and employees shall perform duties without favoritism, bias, or discrimination. All decisions and actions should be made based on objective criteria, in the public's best interest, without undue influence from personal relationships or affiliations.
5. **Confidentiality:** Officers and employees shall protect sensitive and confidential information acquired during the course of official duties. Such information shall only be disclosed when authorized or legally obligated to do so. Officers and employees must not use confidential information for personal gain.
6. **Lawfulness:** Officers and employees shall adhere to all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and policies governing government operations. Officers and employees must perform their duties within the legal frameworks established by the government.
7. **Public Service:** Officers and employees shall serve the public interest faithfully, placing the welfare of the citizens of the USVI and public interest above personal gain or the interests of any individual or organization. Officers and employees must uphold the dignity and responsibilities of public office, promoting public confidence in government.

SECTION 6: PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES: To safeguard the integrity and impartiality of the USVI government, the following activities are strictly prohibited. No officer or employee of the Government of the Virgin Islands shall:

1. Interest in Claims

- directly or indirectly, receive or agree to receive any compensation, reward, or benefit for any services rendered or to be rendered, either by himself or any another, in relation to any proceeding, contract, claim, controversy, charge, accusation or arrest, or other matter in which the government of the Virgin Islands is a party or directly or indirectly interested, before any department or agency of the government.
 - This includes accepting payment, gifts, or any form of compensation in exchange for influencing decisions, providing services, or engaging in activities related to claims, contracts, or disputes involving the GVI.

2. Presentation of Claims:

- act as an agent or attorney prosecuting any claim against the Government of the Virgin Islands, or aid or assist in the prosecution or support of any such claim, other than in the proper discharge of official duties, in exchange for anything of value, including money, any interest in the claim, or any other form of compensation or gratuity.
 - This prohibition includes initiating or supporting legal actions against the GVI in a professional capacity while employed by the government.
 - This section does not infringe upon any right to seek damages against the GVI in cases of crimes, torts, or in the capacity of whistleblowers. Officers and employees retain their rights to pursue personal claims for legitimate grievances as protected by law.

3. Adverse Interest:

- being directly or indirectly interested in the pecuniary profits, gains, contracts or any other interests personal or financial of any corporation, joint-stock company, or association, or any firm or partnership, or other business entity, transact any business with any such entity while acting in their official capacity with the GVI, including any action, decision, or negotiation that could influence any business dealings between the GVI and the business entity in which the officer or employee has a financial or personal interest.
 - The GVI strives to be a good corporate neighbor to the communities it serves. You are encouraged to participate, as a private citizen, in the political process and as an advocate for religious and charitable organizations, so long as your participation does not: (a) interfere with the satisfactory performance of your official duties; (b) bring discredit or embarrassment to the GVI; or (c) create a conflict of interest.

4. Outside Employment

- engage in outside employment or other outside activity incompatible with the full and proper discharge of official responsibilities or duties. Abuse of leave privileges to engage in outside work shall be treated as an interference with official performance of duty.
 - While the GVI does not prohibit officers or employees from performing outside work solely because the work is of the same general nature as the work performed in their official capacity for the Government, no such officer or employee may perform work for compensation outside of their official capacity in the government service:
 1. If the work is required to be done as a part of regular official duties; and
 2. If the work involves active proprietary management of a business closely related to the official work of the officer or employee; and
 3. If the work relates to any matter in which the Government has an interest directly or indirectly; and
 4. If the work is to be performed while an officer or employee is on duty; and
 5. If the work may reasonably be construed by the public to be an official act of the Government; and
 6. If the work involves the use of the Government facilities, equipment, supplies, or resources of any kind; and
 7. if the work involves the use of official information which is not available to the public.

5. Extra Compensation:

- receive compensation or anything of monetary value, from any source other than their respective GVI employer, in connection with official duties and services rendered as an officer or employee.
 - This Includes consultations, lectures, discussions, writings or appearances the subject matter of which is:
 - 1) devoted substantially to the responsibilities, programs or operations of the officer's or employee's department or agency or
 - 2) draws substantially upon official data, proposals or ideas which have not become part of the body of public information
- **Exceptions:**
 - 1) Contributions made by the federal government, or the government of any state of the United States, or any political subdivision thereof as part of a joint or participating program.

- 2) Participation in meritorious public service award given by charitable or other civic organizations.

6. Misuse of Government Resources:

- use GVI assets (i.e., equipment, vehicles, facilities, supplies, or funds), which are assigned or made available to employees, for any reason other than authorized business purposes. Any other use, such as after-hours or charitable work, must receive prior approval from a supervisor, is incidental, or does not interfere with government operations.
 - Those of us who are given custody of GVI equipment or other assets are expected to understand the proper use and maintenance of the equipment or assets. All GVI assets in the custody of an employee are required to be returned in an acceptable condition and upon request or when the employee leaves the GVI.

7. Discrimination and Harassment:

- engage in discriminatory behavior or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other characteristic protected by law. Officers and employees shall not abuse their position of power to engage in inappropriate conduct with colleagues, subordinates, or citizens.

8. Confidentiality and Public Information:

- disclose or misuse confidential or sensitive government information that is not intended for public release.
 - This includes using information gained through official duties for personal benefit or to benefit others.

9. Substance Abuse and Illegal/Unethical Conduct:

- report to work under the influence of alcohol, illegal, or any impairing substances. Officers and employees shall not engage in illegal or unethical conduct, on or off duty, which may bring discredit to the government or undermine public trust.

SECTION 7: REPORTING VIOLATIONS: All officers and employees have a responsibility to report any violations of this Code of Ethical Conduct. Reports of potential violations should be in writing and directed to the appropriate internal agency official, the Department of Justice, the Office of the Inspector General, the Division of Personnel, or other designated authorities. The appropriate authority shall thoroughly investigate all allegations of misconduct or ethical violations. Employees are expected and required to fully cooperate with any investigation into alleged misconduct and/or violation of the Order.

- Officers and employees shall encourage the reporting, including self-reporting, of unethical behavior, corruption, possible conflict(s) of interest, or misconduct within the government and ensure those who report such behavior are protected from retaliation.

- Retaliation against individuals who, in good faith, report ethical violations or participate in investigations is strictly prohibited.

SECTION 8: CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE: The government shall expect the resignation, or will dismiss, suspend, demote, reprimand, or take any other appropriate disciplinary action against any officer or employee who violates this order. Violations of this Code of Ethical Conduct may result in disciplinary actions, including but not limited to reprimand, suspension, demotion, termination of employment, and/or referral for criminal/civil prosecution.

- Officers and employees found to have engaged in prohibited activities may be required to reimburse the government for any losses or damages incurred because of their actions and/or violations.

SECTION 9: REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS: This Code of Ethical Conduct is subject to periodic review to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Amendments may be made as necessary to address emerging ethical challenges or changes in laws and regulations.

SECTION 10: TRAINING AND AWARENESS: All government officers and employees will receive training on this Code of Ethical Conduct upon hiring and at period intervals throughout their tenure.

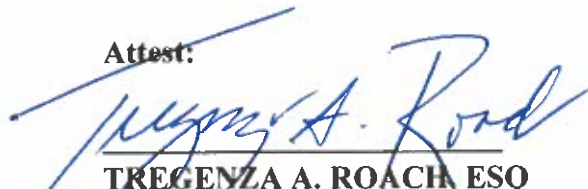
- Agency heads shall be responsible for ensuring all officers and employees are aware of this Executive Order and understand the content and obligations under this Order. Copies of this Order shall be given to each employee presently employed and to each new officer and employee upon employment.

SECTION 11: EFFECTIVE DATE: This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon issuance and shall remain in effect until amended, superseded, or rescinded. Executive Order No. 53-1962 is hereby rescinded and replaced.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands to be affixed this 27th day of January, 2025.




ALBERT BRYAN JR.
GOVERNOR

Attest:

TREGENZA A. ROACH, ESQ
LT. GOVERNOR