GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Draft Freedom of Information Act, 2012 Available for Public Review and Feedback

Release Date: 12 January, 2026



The Government of the Virgin Islands today announced that the draft Freedom of Information Act, 2012 is now publicly available for review, marking a significant step toward strengthening transparency, accountability, and public participation in governance.

Members of the public, civil society organisations, the private sector, and other stakeholders are invited to review the draft legislation and submit their feedback to the Premier's Office as part of the public consultation process.

"The draft Freedom of Information Act is intended to provide the public with a clear legal right to access official documents held by government ministries, departments, and public authorities, subject to carefully defined exemptions that protect essential public interests, personal privacy, and national security," said Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt Igwe, Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office. She added: "The legislation also establishes systems and obligations to proactively publish key government information, promote sound record-keeping, and ensure timely responses to information requests."

Key features of the draft Freedom of Information Act, 2012 include:

- a general right of access to official government information without the need to provide reasons for a request;
- the establishment of a Freedom of Information Unit to facilitate and support public access;
- clear timelines and duties on public authorities to assist applicants;
- defined exemptions balanced by a public-interest test;
- oversight and enforcement through the Complaints Commissioner; and
- measures to promote openness, including whistleblower protections and training of public officials.

Permanent Secretary Stoutt Igwe pointed out that the draft legislation reflects the work of the Law Reform Commission and aligns with internationally recognised

principles of open government, while being tailored to the Virgin Islands' constitutional and administrative framework.

The draft legislation is attached as a PDF document.

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About:
The Government of the Virgin Islands is committed to promoting good governance and the sustainable development of the Territory with a view to ensuring a well-informed, prosperous, cohesive and stable society. The Premier's Office serves as the focal point for coordinating cross-sectoral policies and programmes and promoting the sustainable development of the Virgin Islands to ensure a well-informed, prosperous, cohesive and stable society.

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Additional Documents or Media

- press_release_draft_foi_act_available_for_public_review.pdf
- freedom_of_information_act,_2012.pdf