



GOVERNMENT OF  
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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# PRESS RELEASE

# Revised

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## VIDOL ANNOUNCES NEW MINIMUM WAGE LAW

The Honorable Cecil R. Benjamin, Commissioner of Labor, announces that the new minimum wage in the U.S. Virgin Islands for the private sector was raised to **\$5.65** from \$5.15 per hour. This law, effective January 1, 2006 was passed by the 26<sup>th</sup> Legislature on September 26, 2005.

Included in this legislation was also the increase of the minimum wage for tipped employees in the hospitality industry **from \$4.30 per hour to \$5.30 effective January 1, 2006**. Commissioner Benjamin states, "We are asking all employers in the territory to comply with this new law to avoid costly and time consuming wage claim violations." The federal minimum wage has not increased since September 1, 1997. States such as California, Washington, Maine, Massachusetts and Oregon have also enacted legislation raising the minimum above the federal minimum wage. "In light of our high cost of living and low or no benefits given to most employees in the private sector, this is a welcome wage policy", concluded the Commissioner.

For further information, please contact the Department of Labor's Division of Labor Relations at **776-3700** on St. Thomas and **692-9686** on St. Croix.