

CABINET OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS - POST MEETING STATEMENT

CABINET DECISIONS

28th April and 5th May, 2021

Cabinet Meeting – 28th April, 2021

His Excellency, the Governor Mr. John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the Meeting held on 28th April, 2021, which was held at the Financial Services Commission's Conference Room.

All Members were present.

The Cabinet:

1. Decided that Dr. B. Clarissa Layne's appointment as member of the Teaching Service Commission be extended for a further period of three (3) years with effect from 1st February, 2021.
2. Considered and approved a no quarantine period for fully vaccinated cruise passengers and crew to allow cruise lines to confirm the proposed calls to the BVI when the Cyril B. Romney Tortola Pier Park fully re-opens in June 2021 and:
 - a. agreed, in principle, that passengers will be permitted to disembark the ship in controlled intervals and participate in social bubble shore excursions; and
 - b. decided that the details of the social bubble shore excursions be developed and presented to the Cabinet by a Working Group led by the Permanent Secretary in the Premier's Office and include the following:
 - i. Junior Minister for Tourism;
 - ii. HEOC Command Unit Team;
 - iii. Cyril B. Romney Tortola Pier Park;
 - iv. Chairman/BVI Tourist Board;
 - v. Director of Tourism;
 - vi. Chairman/BVI Ports Authority;
 - vii. Managing Director/BVI Ports Authority;
 - viii. Commissioner of Customs;

- ix. Chief Immigration Officer;
 - x. Director, Taxi and Livery Commission; and
 - xi. Any other officials, as required.
- 3. Decided to grant approval for payment of works carried out by Union Property Company Limited to retrofit office accommodation for the Social Development Department, Ministry of Health and Social Development, located at Botanic Station; waive the tender process in the amount of one hundred and twenty-one thousand and sixty-three hundred dollars (\$121,063.00) and ratify after the occurrence of the expenditure; and that Government enters a formal agreement with Union Property Company Limited in the above amount payable in monthly installments, over a period of five (5) years).
- 4. Decided:
 - a. that the following persons be re-appointed to the Board of Immigration, for a period of two (2) years with effect from 1st May, 2021:
 - i. Mr. Glen Harrigan - Chairman
 - ii. Ms. Rosalia Gardener - Member
 - iii. Roxanne Sylvester - Member
 - b. that the following persons be appointed to the Board of Immigration, for a period of two (2) years with effect from 1st May, 2021:
 - i. Mr. Shane Baptiste - Member
 - ii. Mr. Coy Levons - Member
 - iii. Mrs. Rexella Hodge - Member
 - iv. Ms. Kimberly Seagojo - Member
 - v. Chief Immigration Officer - *ex-officio* Member; and
 - c. approved a monthly stipend to be paid to the Chairman at a rate of twelve hundred dollars (\$1,200.00) and eight hundred dollars (\$800.00) to Members.
- 5. Decided that:
 - a. pursuant to section 12 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, Cap. 237, relevant Government ministries, offices and departments should, subject to the advice of the Attorney General, seek actively to participate in the Commission of Inquiry (Col);

- b. having regard to Rule 13 (6) of the COI Rules, published by the Commissioner on 13th April 2021, the relevant Government ministries, offices and departments should participate in the Col through the Attorney General and be represented by leading counsel, the Right Honourable Sir Geoffrey Cox QC, who is appointed and instructed by the Attorney General to advise and represent her; and
- c. that each relevant Government ministry, office and department should make appropriate arrangements to enable the Attorney General, and counsel appointed by her, to carry out a full objective review of those matters under its responsibility that the Attorney General or counsel advises are necessary to be examined in connection with preparing for participation in the Col.

6. Approved two Non-Belongers land holding licence applications.

Cabinet Meeting – 5th May, 2021

His Excellency, the Governor Mr. John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the Meeting held on 5th May, 2021 at the Financial Services Commission's Conference Room.

All Members were present.

The Cabinet:

1. Considered and:

- a. approved the Bill entitled, Immigration and Passport (Amendment) Act, 2021, which seeks to increase:
 - i. fines related to illegal entry and smuggling;
 - ii. the Chief Immigration Officer's powers to compound offences; and
 - iii. the length of time issued to persons holding Non-Belonger Land Holding Licenses to remain in the Territory
- b. decided that the Bill be introduced in the House of Assembly for its first reading at the next convenient Sitting; and

- c. approved the Immigration and Passport (Amendment) Regulations, 2021, which seek to address Schedule 3 of the Regulation by introducing fees for Non-Belonger Land Holding services and decided that the Regulations be published in the Virgin Islands Official Gazette and thereafter be tabled in the House of Assembly at the next convenient Sitting.
2. Decided that Pastor Calvin Mills (Chairman); Mrs. Keturah Crabbe (Deputy Chairman) and Mrs. Wistaria Donovan be re-appointed as members of the Public Assistance Committee for a period of three (3) years with effect from 3rd February, 2021 to 2nd February, 2024 and that Ms. Trisha Evans be re-appointed as a member for a period of three (3) years with effect from 22nd March, 2021 until 21st March, 2024.
3. Decided:
 - a. that the gateway fee shall be reduced to:
 - i. \$105 for fully vaccinated travellers; and
 - ii. \$70 for fully vaccinated day trippers leaving the Territory;
 - b. that where a fully vaccinated traveller is accompanied by one or more unvaccinated child, aged 5-17, and the child's and party's arrival tests are negative, the child will be released from quarantine together with their parents/guardian, but must only roam within their family bubble and be subject to a further test at day four;
 - c. that where a travelling party includes fully vaccinated and unvaccinated adults, the entire party will be treated as unvaccinated;
 - d. that a fully vaccinated traveller may be approved for home quarantine in a residence where all adult occupants are fully vaccinated, if the traveller/party is provided with a separate bedroom;
 - e. to amend the list of restricted countries under the Immigration and Passport (Prohibition of Entry) Order, 2021 to apply only to Brazil and India;
 - f. that persons travelling from Brazil and India will be required to undergo a mandatory fourteen (14) day quarantine on arrival, provided they undergo a five-day rt-PCR testing regimen, prior to arrival and on days 0 and 14;
 - g. that unvaccinated travellers from non-restricted countries should now be required to quarantine for a period of seven (7) days;

- h. that partially vaccinated travellers must be quarantined for a period of four (4) days upon arrival;
- i. that a person seeking to be certified as a 'day tripper' should apply for re-entry through the Gateway prior to departure from the Virgin Islands;
- j. that fully vaccinated day trippers can travel with children who are under five (5) years old;
- k. that refusal by a returning 'day tripper' to undergo Day 7 testing would be subject to a fixed penalty of five thousand dollars or a court penalty of ten thousand dollars on summary conviction;
- l. that the HEOC present the Cabinet with recommendations for rapid or PCR testing for frontline workers and public officers;
- m. that the Ministry of Health and Social Development instruct the Attorney General to draft the amendments to the Immigration and Passport (Prohibition of Entry) Order, 2021, and the COVID-19 Control and Suppression (Entry of Persons) Regulations, 2021 necessary to give effect to the agreed policy changes; and
- n. considered that given both the wish to re-open the Territory to tourism and the need to mitigate the risks arising from increased travel, particularly arising from new variants, that the period for quarantine for unvaccinated travellers be extended from four days to seven days.

Published by the Cabinet Office on 13th May, 2021.

###

Guidelines:

1. Cabinet decisions will be published by the Cabinet Office following confirmation of the Minutes.
2. Only a summary of the decisions will be published.
3. Cabinet discussions will not be disclosed.
4. Cabinet decisions of a sensitive nature, matters of national security, those where publication breaches regional or international conventions and those relating to personal privacy will not be disclosed.
5. Cabinet decisions will be published in the weekly issues of the Virgin Islands Official Gazette at www.eservices.gov.vg/gazette.
6. Cabinet decisions will be also available on bvi.gov.vg and on Twitter.