



Government of the Virgin Islands Releases New Guidelines for Residence and Belonger Status Applications

The Government of the Virgin Islands has announced the release of its new "Guidance for Applicants of Residence and Belonger Status in the Virgin Islands". This comprehensive document is designed to provide clear and detailed information to individuals seeking to obtain Residence or Belonger Status in the Territory.

The guidelines were created to enhance transparency and streamline the application process, helping applicants understand the specific requirements and procedures. They outline various pathways for applicants to demonstrate their integration, contributions, and commitment to the Virgin Islands.

Key features of the new guidelines include:

- **Detailed explanations of eligibility criteria:** The guidelines outline eligibility criteria for Residence and Belonger Status applications, detailing the necessary qualifications and required documentation.
- **Examples of supporting evidence:** A range of examples is provided to help applicants understand the types of evidence that can be used to support their applications, allowing flexibility in demonstrating their qualifications.
- **Guidelines for demonstrating good character:** The guidelines detail how applicants can demonstrate good character, including participation in community activities, respect for cultural heritage, compliance with laws, environmental stewardship, economic contribution, inclusivity, financial stability, and positive personal conduct.
- **Distinction between Residence and Belonger Status:** The guidelines clarify the distinctions between Residence and Belonger Status applications, noting the higher level of integration and contribution expected from Belonger Status applicants.

Hon. Dr. Natalio Wheatley, Premier and Minister responsible for Immigration, stated, "Our Government is committed to making the immigration process fair, transparent, and aligned with the values and aspirations we hold for our Territory's future. These new guidelines are an important step forward in ensuring our processes support our national sustainable development goals, and welcome those who contribute positively to the Virgin Islands."

The "Guidance for Applicants of Residence and Belonger Status in the Virgin Islands" is attached herein for reference. Prospective applicants are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the guidelines. The new legislative amendments that underpin this document will be released in due course.

The Ministry of Financial Services, Economic Development, and Digital Transformation is responsible for managing immigration policies within the Virgin Islands. Committed to fostering innovation, efficiency, and compliance, the Ministry oversees immigration regulations and works to ensure that its policies and services align with the Territory's goals for sustainable economic development, modernisation, and a well-regulated migration framework that supports nation-building.