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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEADLINES EXTENDED TO FILE FOR DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR HURRICANE IRMA AND MARIA

Today, Catherine Hendry, Esq., Commissioner for the Virgin Islands Department of Labor announces filing extensions to apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) to December 29, 2017. DUA provides unemployment benefits to individuals who have become unemployed as a direct result of a major disaster and who are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance ie: independent contractors, small business owners, taxi drivers, hair dressers, barbers, and fishermen. DUA is available to Virgin Islands residents and businesses whose employment or self-employment was lost or interrupted as a direct result of Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria.

The DUA is available to individuals as follows:

- 1) You are unemployed due to the disaster and do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits; OR
- 2) You are self-employed or a small business owner who lost income due to the disaster; OR
- 3) You are prevented from working due to an injury caused by the disaster; OR
- 4) You have become the sole supporter of the household due to the disaster-related death or injury of another family member; OR
- 5) You are unable to reach your job or self-employment location because you must travel through the affected area and are prevented from doing so by the disaster; OR
- 6) You were to commence employment or self-employment but were prevented by the disaster; AND
- 7) You have not refused an offer of employment in a suitable position.

Applications filed after the December 29th, 2017 deadline will be considered untimely and DUA benefits may be denied. Applicants must submit a valid Government issued ID, their Social Security card, and employment proof (i.e. check stubs, income tax return, bank statements, and documentation) to support the claim that they were working or self-employed when the disaster occurred. In some cases, additional documentation may be required. To receive DUA benefits, all required documentation must be submitted within 90 days from the date the DUA application is filed.

To apply for available job positions and receive re-employment services or to apply for unemployment benefits or DUA, those affected by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria can file your claims in person at the VIDOL Office on St. Thomas at 2353 Kronprindsens Gade, on St. John M-W-F at the VI Legislature, St. John Annex ID Cruz Bay, St. John, and on St. Croix at the VIDOL Office at 4401 Sion Farm.

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“Labor Works...Let Labor Work For You.”

The Virgin Islands Department of Labor is an Equal Opportunity Employer with Equal Opportunity Programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.