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Bryan Implements New Code of Ethics As Former Public Officials Answer to Corruption Charges

In response to federal charges against former officials, the governor unveils a new Code of Ethics and transparency measures to restore public trust.

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Nelcia Charlemagne **January 28, 2025**

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L2r: Former public officials Ray Martinez, Jenifer O'Neal, Calvert White, Davidson Charlemagne, and Darin Richardson.

Accusations of corruption by the federal government against former top-ranking public officials have captured the attention of the Virgin Islands public for months. While Governor Albert Bryan Jr. presented his penultimate State of the Territory Address on Monday evening, his former [Commissioner of Police Ray Martinez](#), former [Director of the Office of Management and Budget Jenifer O'Neal](#), former Commissioner of the Department of Sports, Parks, and Recreation [Calvert](#)

[White](#), former V.I. Housing Finance Authority Chief Operating Officer Darin Richardson, and former Director of Maintenance in the Department of Education [Davidson Charlemagne](#) all prepare to defend the myriad of charges laid against them – all associated with one corrupt practice or another.

The perception that this has created in the public’s mind was not lost on Governor Bryan. “Some may seize this moment to paint the entire Bryan-Roach Administration with the brush of corruption. But let me be clear: my concern is not for our reputation alone. My fear is that these accusations will cast a shadow over the character of all Virgin Islanders,” he pointedly declared.

While he says the Virgin Islands community has been “confronted with painful truths,” Governor Bryan ultimately rejected the narrative that he said could take hold — that the people of the territory are a corrupt collective. “We are a people of integrity, resilience, and faith—hardworking individuals committed to creating better lives for our families and communities,” he contended. “What defines us should never be limited to the actions of any one group.”

In light of the recent criminal charges against former officials, however, Governor Bryan has “pored over policies, scrutinized procedures, reviewed codes of conduct, and examined the indictments, searching for the fault lines that allow these encounters to happen.” However, he seems to have come up short. “I have come to a sobering realization: no policy, no procedure, no code of conduct can entirely guard against human weakness,” he told the people of the Virgin Islands.

Instead, he announced that he remains “steadfast in my commitment to uproot this mistrust and restore faith in our institutions.” To that end, Governor Bryan has instituted a “new and comprehensive Code of Ethics” aimed at stamping out corruption in any form, including theft, fraud, or the misappropriation of funds. “Our charge is to protect government resources,” he said.

The GVI, Mr. Bryan assured, has “built a framework for transparency and accountability that is stronger than ever before.” Competitive bidding processes, modernized procurement processes, and required transparency from the Government of the Virgin Islands for all significant projects are expected to prevent similar actions from happening in the future. The V.I. Department of Personnel has also been tasked with providing [training on the principles of ethical governance](#) to all government employees, including members of the cabinet.

“What defines us should never be limited to the actions of any one group,” he reminded the public. “Our administration is determined to emerge from this chapter stronger, more transparent, and more resilient. Together, we are building a legacy of trust and accountability.”