

logo not found or type unknown

Government Seeks \$1.2 Million in Rent Arrears From 198 Property Tenants

Property and Procurement is seeking about \$1.2 million in rent arrears from 198 tenants while moving to reclaim properties, lease underused buildings, expand online auctions and replace paper gas coupons with a fleet card system in the fiscal year 2027.

Government / **Published On July 14, 2026 06:05 AM /**

Nelcia Charlemagne **July 14, 2026**

Image not found or type unknown



Assistant Commissioner Vincent Richards testifies during DPP's budget hearing, where officials outlined efforts to collect approximately \$1.2 million in unpaid rent through payment plans and legal action. By. V.I. LEGISLATURE.

The V.I. Department of Property and Procurement is pursuing payment plans and legal remedies to collect approximately \$1.2 million in outstanding rent from tenants across the territory, while

also moving to recover certain properties from occupants who remain in arrears.

The collection effort was among several revenue, property-management and operational matters discussed during the department's budget hearing Monday.

Assistant Commissioner Vincent Richards described the effort as an "ongoing process."

He told Senator Marvin Blyden that the department is "aggressively reaching out to either collect and/or to arrange our payment plans with tenants."

DPP has 198 tenants and an annual rent roll of \$4,258,706.88. As of May 31, 2026, it had collected \$2,470,615.73 in rental revenue, which is deposited into the Business and Commercial Properties Revolving Fund.

Mr. Blyden urged the department to move quickly to collect the outstanding balances, arguing that the properties are offered at favorable rates and that other prospective tenants are willing to meet their obligations.

"These properties are [a] very good price. They get them for a reasonable rate, and there are many individuals trying to get those units who are willing to pay you on time and pay for their fair share," he said.

Mr. Blyden welcomed Mr. Richards's disclosure that DPP is also "pursuing legal remedies" to "regain certain properties."

Underused and Derelict Government Properties

DPP currently manages \$1.2 billion in insured property across the U.S. Virgin Islands. That amount reflects the insured value of the portfolio rather than the number of individual properties owned by the Government of the Virgin Islands.

Mr. Richards expects the portfolio's value to "increase tremendously with the amount of reconstruction and construction that's going on."

He also confirmed to Senator Novelle Francis that the government has opportunities to develop existing underused properties and make them available for additional leasing.

"We do have a significant amount of leases...that's headed your way for consideration for the development of a significant amount of these properties," Mr. Richards told the committee.

Mr. Francis reminded DPP that under Title 33, revenue generated from leasing a closed school must be directed toward school maintenance.

Mr. Richards said the department had acquired two properties from the V.I. Department of Education using federal funds and was collecting "significant rent revenues from these properties."

The department is "prepared to put it where it's supposed to go," he said.

Senator Hubert Frederick focused on the government's unused properties and questioned DPP's leadership about plans to reduce the "inventory of unused and derelict buildings..."

Mr. Richards said one part of the solution would require bringing more proposed leases before the Legislature for approval.

“One of the answers is basically spending more time down here presenting leasing opportunities before this body to get some of the properties that we have that are not operational into the hands of the private sector to help develop,” he said.

Mr. Frederick, however, was particularly interested in rehabilitating government-owned buildings for use by government departments.

“We have agencies that are scouring the whole territory looking for vacancies so that they could house their operations,” he said.

The senator argued that suitable government buildings already exist but require repairs.

“We have buildings; they’re just in bad shape that need to be fixed up,” he said.

Mr. Frederick lamented the government’s continued practice of renting space from private property owners. He argued that rehabilitating government buildings would cost less over time and recommended using the properties to house agencies, thereby “saving the government tons of money and just making it more appealing for the community so we don’t have to see these eyesores.”

Mr. Richards said several factors can make some government buildings “unattractive.”

Among the challenges are insufficient parking, “uneven floors” and the fact that “the layout of the buildings is dated in terms of where the walls are...and ventilation.”

Property and Procurement Commissioner Lisa Alejandro said the Division of Property will soon issue a solicitation and “ask the public and anyone interested to submit proposals.”

Vendors Plaza and Online Auctions Generate Revenue

Beyond its broader property portfolio, DPP manages kiosks at Vendors Plaza in Charlotte Amalie.

Following “aggressive collection attempts”, the department collected \$116,354 in rental revenue as of May 31, 2026, according to Ms. Alejandro. That was \$26,859 more than the amount collected in fiscal year 2025.

The department also conducted its first fully online silent salvage auction of government assets this year.

Registration fees and sales generated \$23,460 in revenue, Ms. Alejandro said.

DPP has since entered into a contract for online auction services, which the commissioner described as an “opportunity to generate revenues,” moving forward.

Fleet Cards to Replace Paper Gas Coupons

The department is also taking steps to “address the GVI’s fuel management needs,” Ms. Alejandro told lawmakers.

DPP awarded a contract to US Ban through a Sourcewell cooperative purchasing agreement for a “fleet card management system.” Implementation is scheduled for the first quarter of fiscal year 2027.

The system will replace the government’s paper-based gasoline coupons and “strengthen financial controls, increase transparency, and improve fuel expenditure management,” according to Ms. Alejandro.

DPP is also finalizing policies and procedures to create a “standardized framework for the management, operation, maintenance, and reporting requirements associated with government-owned vehicles,” she said.

The policies will “support greater accountability, consistency, safety, and operational efficiency...”

Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Request

For fiscal year 2027, DPP is requesting an operating budget of \$23,357,952, including \$19,057,952 in appropriated funding and \$5,300,000 in non-appropriated funding.

The appropriated request includes \$14,632,378 from the General Fund, \$4,240,574 from the Business and Commercial Properties Revolving Fund and \$185,000 in indirect costs.

The non-appropriated funding includes \$700,000 from the Central Motor Pool Fund, \$900,000 from the Central Warehouse Fund, \$3 million from the Gasoline Coupon Fund and \$700,000 from the Printing and Production Fund.

The fiscal year 2027 request also includes \$1,010,407.78 for 11 new and vacant positions, according to Ms. Alejandro.