

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

11/12/2025-HELD IN COMMITTEE

BILL NO. 36-0188

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

September 17, 2025

An act amending title 17 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 23, by adding a subchapter III establishing the Virgin Islands Technical College; amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 7, subchapter I section 99 to increase the membership of the Board for Career and Technical Education; amending title 17 Virgin Islands Code chapter 23, subchapter I, section 262 to clarify the duties of the Board for Career and Technical Education relating to the Virgin Islands Technical College and section 263 relating to the Career-Technical Education Training Fund, and for other related purposes

PROPOSED BY: Senator Avery L. Lewis
Co-sponsor: Hubert L. Frederick

1 **WHEREAS**, the economic vitality of the Virgin Islands depends on a workforce
2 equipped with practical, technical, and skilled trade expertise;

3 **WHEREAS**, technical colleges serves students who seek immediate workforce entry,
4 career advancement, or specialized technical training, offering critical flexibility that
5 universities, with their primarily academic and research focus, often cannot offer;

6 **WHEREAS**, technical colleges offer an essential educational pathway distinct from
7 traditional universities, focusing on hands-on skills, career readiness, and direct employment
8 opportunities, additionally providing multiple postsecondary pathways that respects the diverse

need, goals, and talents of Virgin Islands residents, ensuring broader access to opportunity and economic mobility; Now, Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. Title 17 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 23 is amended as follows:

(a) the chapter is renamed the “Vocational Education and Rehabilitation and the Virgin Islands Technical College”;

(b) Section 262 is amended in subsection (a) as follows:

(1) by redesignating paragraph (12) as paragraph (16) and adding a new paragraph (12) and paragraphs (13) - (15) that read:

“(12) oversee the general operations of the Virgin Islands Technical College;

(13) evaluate applicants and hire a Chancellor of the Virgin Islands Technical College;

(14) review and approve the annual budget for the Virgin Islands Technical College;

(15) establish guiding policies and procedures for the operation of the Virgin Islands Technical College; and”;

(2) subsections (b) and (d) by inserting "the Virgin Islands Technical College and" before "the University of the Virgin Islands" where it appears in each subsection; and

(3) subsections (e) and (g) are amended by inserting “the Virgin Islands Technical College or” before "the Department of Education" where it appears in each subsection.

(c) The following subchapter III is added:

“Subchapter III. Virgin Islands Technical College

1 **§ 275. Definitions**

2 **For the purposes of this subchapter:**

3 (1) “Technical College” means an institution focused on delivering practical
4 education and training in specific trades and technical fields.

5 (2) “Dual enrollment” means a program that allows secondary students to enroll
6 in postsecondary coursework for credit toward both high school and college credentials.

7 (3) “Stackable credentials” means a series of certificates that build progressively
8 toward higher qualifications, allowing students to advance educationally and
9 professionally at their own pace.

10 **§ 276. Establishment; duties and responsibilities**

11 (a) There is established within the Department of Education, for budgetary purposes
12 only, the Virgin Islands Technical College (“VITC”). The Virgin Islands Technical College
13 shall operate independently through a Chancellor, under the general direction of the Board for
14 Career and Technical Education, to oversee and administer secondary and postsecondary
15 educational courses.

16 (b) The Virgin Islands Technical College shall:

17 (1) work collaboratively with the Virgin Islands Department of Education and
18 the University of the Virgin Islands to develop courses for career and technical education
19 courses and certificate programs; confer industry-recognized credentials and associate
20 degrees; and provide customized workforce training;

21 (2) obtain and maintain accreditation for degree and non-degree programs; and

22 (3) prioritize partnerships with local industries, labor organizations; and
23 employers to ensure curriculum relevance and graduate employability.

24 **§ 277. Chancellor of Virgin Islands Technical College**

1 (a) The Virgin Technical College is administered by a Chancellor selected by the Board
2 for Career and Technical Education, who may be removed by the Board for cause.

3 (b) The Chancellor shall:

4 (1) manage the daily operations of the VITC;

5 (2) create and maintain the budget of the VITC;

6 (3) hire appropriate staff;

7 (4) provide annual reports to the Board for Career and Technical Education;

8 (5) seek funding sources for the VITC and developing partnerships with the
9 private sector to further the purpose of the VITC;

10 (6) solicit proposals for and to engage in partnerships to further the objectives of
11 the VITC, in accordance with the parameters established by the Board for Career and
12 Technical Education;

13 (7) execute contracts or other instruments to further the objectives of the VITC,
14 in accordance with existing law and within the parameters established by the Board for
15 Career and Technical Education;

16 (8) accept and manage financial gifts, grants, and to manage the financial
17 resources of the Virgin Islands Technical College and provide appropriate accounting to
18 the Board and the Department of Finance;

19 (9) evaluate and approve procurement, planning, and construction projects in
20 accordance with applicable law and within the parameters established by the Board for
21 Career and Technical Education; and

22 (10) perform other tasks in furtherance of the purpose of the Virgin Islands
23 Technical College.”

1 **SECTION 2.** Title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 7, section 99 is amended by striking
2 subsection (b) and inserting the following new subsection (b):

3 “(b) The Board is composed of 14 members, 11 voting members and three non-voting
4 members. The non-voting members must be teachers appointed by the Governor who are
5 actively teaching in the career technical educational field. The voting members are:

6 (1) two current employees of the University of the Virgin Islands, selected by the
7 President of the University, who have experience in vocational education;

8 (2) two current employees of the Virgin Islands Department of Education,
9 selected by the Commissioner of the Department of Education, who have experience in
10 vocational education;

11 (3) the Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Labor, or the
12 Commissioner’s designee;

13 (4) the chairperson of Work Force Development, or the chair’s designee;

14 (5) a representative from the Office of the Governor, selected by the Governor;

15 (6) two members from the private sector who are actively working in career and
16 technical industries, who are appointed by the Governor with the consent of the
17 Legislature; and

18 (7) two residents of the Virgin Islands who have experience in career and
19 technical industry education, who are appointed by the Governor with the consent of the
20 Legislature.”

21 **BILL SUMMARY**

22 This bill establishes the Virgin Islands Technical College under the administration of the
23 Board for Career and Technical Education and within the Virgin Islands Department of
24 Education for budgetary purposes. It provides for a Chancellor to administer the college and
25 increases the membership of the Board for Career and Technical Education and sets forth the
26 composition of the Board, to include the credentials of the Board members.

1 **BR25-0642/August 14, 2025/SLR**