

BILL NO. 36-0324

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

July 21, 2026

An act establishing a 90-day amnesty period for certain outstanding patient accounts at the Roy L. Schneider Hospital and Community Health Center and the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center, to improve revenue collection, provide financial relief to residents, and for other related purposes

PROPOSED BY: Senators Kenneth L. Gittens and Kurt A. Vialet
Sponsor: Angel L. Bolques, Jr.

- 1 **WHEREAS**, the Legislature finds that the healthcare system within the Virgin Islands
2 is experiencing significant operational and financial challenges that threaten the delivery of
3 timely and adequate medical care to residents;
- 4 **WHEREAS**, the Roy L. Schneider Hospital and Community Health Center on St.
5 Thomas and the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center on St. Croix have faced
6 persistent concerns raised by both the community and frontline healthcare workers, including
7 prolonged emergency room wait times, shortages of essential supplies, malfunctioning or
8 outdated equipment, wage discrepancies, and delayed payroll;
- 9 **WHEREAS**, the Legislature recognizes that inconsistent and delayed billing practices
10 have materially impaired the hospitals’ ability to collect revenue for services rendered,
11 resulting in substantial accounts receivable backlogs and contributing to cash flow instability;

1 **WHEREAS**, while steps have been taken to improve billing operations through the
2 engagement of a third-party billing entity, immediate action is required to stabilize revenues,
3 encourage payment of outstanding balances, and restore public confidence;

4 **WHEREAS**, the purpose of this act is to incentivize the prompt settlement of outstanding
5 patient accounts, improve revenue recovery, and provide temporary financial relief to residents
6 through the establishment of a 90-day amnesty program waiving penalties, interest, and late
7 fees on eligible accounts and provide a twenty-five percent reduction of the outstanding balance
8 for qualified participants. Now, Therefore,

9 ***Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:***

10 **SECTION 1.** This act may be cited as the “Hospital Billing Amnesty Act”

11 **SECTION 2.** For purposes of this act:

12 (a) “hospitals” means the Roy L. Schneider Hospital and Community Health
13 Center on St. Thomas and the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center on St.
14 Croix.

15 (b) “amnesty program” means the 90-day billing amnesty program established
16 under this act.

17 (c) “eligible accounts” means all outstanding patient accounts accrued prior to
18 the effective date of the amnesty program, excluding amounts owed by third-party payers
19 or accounts subject to unresolved billing disputes.

20 **SECTION 3.** Within 30 days after the effective date of this act, the Board of Directors
21 of the Virgin Islands Government Hospitals and Health Facilities Corporation, through the
22 chief executive officer, shall implement a 90-day amnesty program for the Roy L. Schneider
23 Hospital and Community Health Center on St. Thomas and the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital
24 and Medical Center on St. Croix.

1 **SECTION 4.** All outstanding balances on eligible accounts paid in full or resolved
2 through an approved payment arrangement during the amnesty period shall receive a twenty-
3 five percent reduction of the outstanding balance, and all penalties, interest and late fees must
4 be waived during the amnesty period. The hospitals shall:

- 5 (1) uniformly and transparently apply the waiver to all eligible accounts; and
- 6 (2) implement internal controls and oversight mechanisms to prevent errors,
7 inconsistencies, or misuse of the amnesty program.

8 The reduction and waiver provided under this section are contingent upon full payment
9 of the adjusted balance or continued compliance with an approved payment arrangement.

10 Eligible accounts participating in the amnesty program shall not be referred to a
11 collection agency during the 90-day period, provided that the account holder remains in
12 compliance with the terms of any approved payment arrangement.

13 **SECTION 5.** (a) The hospitals shall coordinate with any contracted third-party
14 billing entity to ensure the accurate and timely issuance of billing statements, reconciliation of
15 accounts, and proper application of amnesty provisions.

16 (b) The hospitals shall conduct a comprehensive public awareness campaign to inform
17 residents of the amnesty program, including eligibility requirements, deadlines, and payment
18 options, press releases, social media posts, community engagement, and direct patient
19 notification where feasible.

20 (c) The hospitals shall ensure adequate staffing, systems, and operational capacity to
21 process payments, respond to patient inquiries, and establish payment plans efficiently during
22 the amnesty program period.

23 (d) Failure to comply with an approved payment arrangement shall result in the loss of
24 the benefits provided under this act, including 25 percent reduction of the outstanding balance

and the waiver of penalties, interest, and late fees. In the event of non-compliance, the hospitals may reinstate the full outstanding balance, less any payments made by the account holder.

SECTION 6. The Board of Directors, through the chief executive officer, shall submit a report to the President of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands no later than 14 business days after the conclusion of the amnesty program. The report shall include:

(a) total number of participating accounts;

(i) total revenue collected during the amnesty program period;

(ii) number and value of payment plans established;

(iii) operational impacts of the program; and

(iv) any recommendations for improving billing and revenue collection practices.

SECTION 7. Upon conclusion of the 90-day amnesty program, standard billing, penalty, and collections practices shall resume, and the hospitals shall ensure that updated and effective billing systems are fully operational to prevent a recurrence of prior deficiencies.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill establishes a 90-day amnesty program period for the Roy L. Schneider Hospital and Community Health Center and the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center during which patients may resolve outstanding medical bills with a twenty-five percent reduction of the outstanding balance and without penalties, interest, or late fees, thereby encouraging payment and improving hospital cash flow.

The bill requires the governing board of the Virgin Islands Government Hospitals and Health Facilities Corporation through the chief executive officer to implement the amnesty program, conduct public outreach, and ensure operational readiness. It provides that failure to comply with an approved payment arrangement results in the loss of the reduction and waiver benefits granted under the program.

1 The bill provides that eligible accounts participating in the amnesty program may not be
2 referred to a collection agency during the 90-day period, so long as the account holder remains
3 in compliance with the terms of the amnesty program or any approved payment arrangement.

4 The bill further mandates that, within 14 business days after the program concludes, a
5 report be submitted to the President of the Legislature detailing participation rates, revenue
6 collected, and overall program impact.

7 **BR26-1099/April 21, 2026/PFA/Revised June 23, 2026/PFA**