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NHI URGES EMPLOYERS TO PAY EMPLOYEES' CONTRIBUTIONS

Employees are not allowed to pay their own contributions

Road Town, Tortola, June 19, 2017– The Virgin Islands National Health Insurance System (NHI) is urging all businesspersons with employees to pay NHI contributions.

For employed persons, NHI premiums are assessed at 7.5% of insurable earnings, which is evenly split between the employee and employer, that is, 3.75% each.

Deputy Director of the Social Security Board with responsibility for NHI, Mr. Roy Barry, said that it is employers' legal obligation to pay contributions, but noted there have been some challenges collecting from a few employers.

He also said, "We have cases where employees want to come in to the NHI Offices to pay. However, employees are not allowed to pay their own contributions. This is not in line with our existing policies and procedures, and it also discourages employers' accountability."

Mr. Barry explained that some employees have claimed that their employers do not make any deductions and ask employees to pay their contributions.

To that end, the NHI chief said, "We will not allow employees to pay for themselves because it will send the message to employers that they are not required to pay their portion, or the 3.75%, of the employees' wages."

The Social Security (Amendment) Act, 2013 states: "Employers of persons in insurable employment...shall be required to pay contributions towards the NHI System".

It further states: "A person who fails to pay any contribution due under this Part shall be liable to pay the full cost of any medical services obtained by him or a person on whose behalf he is liable to pay such contributions".

To report a delinquent employer, or to obtain more information on contributions, call (284) 852-7860, email info@vinhi.vg, or visit the NHI office at the Social Security Board Building on Wickham's Cay I.

National Health Insurance is designed to improve health outcomes and provide financial risk protection by ensuring that every resident of the Virgin Islands will have affordable access to the health services they need.

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Notes to Editor(s): Photograph is attached.

Mr. Roy Barry (www.vinhi.vg)