

Three Virgin Islanders Ask Court to Decide Whether Political Parties Must File Campaign Finance Reports

With the 2026 election cycle already taking shape, three plaintiffs are asking the District Court to clarify whether political parties in the V.I. fall under campaign disclosure laws and whether the Elections Supervisor must enforce those requirements.

Politics / **Published On March 10, 2026 06:04 AM /**

Janeke Simon **March 10, 2026**

Image not found or type unknown



As the U.S. Virgin Islands moves deeper into preparation for the 2026 primary and general election, three Virgin Islanders have turned to the courts for answers on whether political parties are legally required to submit campaign disclosure reports to the Elections System of the Virgin Islands — an issue they argue has gone unaddressed for years and now carries direct consequences for election administration in the territory.

A complaint filed Monday in the District Court of the Virgin Islands seeks judicial clarification on what the plaintiffs describe as mandatory statutory duties under Title 18, Chapter 29 of the Virgin Islands Code.

“This action seeks judicial clarification and enforcement of mandatory statutory duties imposed under Title 18 of the Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 29,” the complaint begins.

The filing follows an acknowledgment by Elections Supervisor Caroline Fawkes that campaign disclosure reports have not been filed by a political party in roughly the last 20 years. During a Board of Elections meeting last week, board members agreed to seek clarification from Ms. Fawkes on what qualifies an organization as a political party in the Virgin Islands. According to the article, that determination would help establish whether local parties meet the threshold that would trigger reporting requirements under Title 18, Chapter 29.

The civil complaint was filed by Shelley Moorhead, Collister Fahie and Lorelei Monsanto. They are asking the court to weigh in on whether political parties in the territory fall within the statutory definition of a “political committee.”

According to the complaint, territorial political parties do meet that definition, which the law describes as “any committee, club, association, or other group of persons which receives contributions or makes expenditures during any calendar year in an aggregate amount exceeding \$1000,” under 18 V.I.C. Section 902(2).

The plaintiffs argue not only that political parties fit that definition, but also that the law does not specifically exempt parties from the sections requiring “political committees” to file periodic campaign disclosure reports.

The lawsuit also raises other concerns involving the Elections System. It states that a complaint filed with the Board of Elections last July by one of the plaintiffs, Mr. Fahie, remains unresolved. That complaint, according to the filing, sought information about “voter list maintenance, complaint resolution procedures, and related election administration matters.”

The article further states that records requests submitted earlier this year also remain outstanding. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Moorhead, Ms. Fawkes reportedly said that the Elections System does not maintain campaign disclosure documents that include financial compliance records.

The plaintiffs argue that the matter requires immediate judicial attention because election preparations for 2026 are already underway, and because a ruling on the campaign disclosure responsibilities of political parties — and the Elections System itself — could affect the work currently being done to administer those elections.

For that reason, they are asking the court to clarify the obligations of both political parties and the Elections Supervisor under Title 18, Chapter 29 of the Virgin Islands Code. If necessary, the complaint also asks the court to issue writs of mandamus directing the Elections Supervisor to carry out what the plaintiffs describe as non-discretionary duties under the law, and to grant injunctive relief where appropriate.

The complaint is currently awaiting the court’s approval to proceed in forma pauperis, which would allow the plaintiffs to move forward without paying the standard court filing fees.