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St. Croix Mother and Son Arrested for Allegedly Forging Lease Documents to Illegally Obtain Electricity

Renee Coates and Jahmoy Martinez were detained after allegedly presenting a forged lease to circumvent previous WAPA sanctions due to unpaid bills

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From left to right, mugshots of Renee Coates and her son Jahmoy Martinez. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — Authorities in St. Croix have arrested Renee Coates and her son Jahmoy Martinez for allegedly using forged documents to illegally obtain electricity services from the V.I. Water and Power Authority.

According to a Tuesday release from the VIPD, the arrests were made after an investigation by the Economic Crimes Unit, which began on March 4, 2024, following a complaint regarding the submission of a forged lease.

The investigation uncovered that Coates, who had previously been barred from obtaining services due to unpaid bills, collaborated with Martinez to falsify a lease agreement. This forged document was then presented to WAPA to set up an account in Martinez's name, circumventing the authority's restrictions on Coates.

On June 3, 2024, Coates and Martinez turned themselves in at the Wilbur H. Francis Command Police Station following the issuance of arrest warrants. Upon their arrival, they were informed of their Miranda Rights, which they chose not to acknowledge, invoking their Fifth Amendment rights instead.

Both were charged with forgery, filing or recording forged instruments, and making fraudulent claims upon the government. They were unable to post the set bail of \$5,500 each and were consequently remanded to the John A. Bell Adult Correctional Facility. They are awaiting their Advice of Rights Hearing.