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Attempted Murder Suspect Randy Lawrence Faces Court Following Restaurant Shooting

Authorities recover unlicensed firearm linked to suspect, who remains in custody under modified bail conditions

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Mugshot of Randy Lawrence By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — The man wanted for attempted murder in connection with last Friday's shooting near a St. George's restaurant has appeared in court after turning himself in.?

Following the shooting on the afternoon of June 21, police issued an [arrest warrant for Randy Lawrence](#), the primary suspect in the shooting of a 34-year old employee of E&D restaurant. Eyewitnesses say that the two men had gotten into a physical altercation before Lawrence pulled out a firearm and shot his opponent.?

Police arriving at the scene said they found the wounded employee on the ground with a bloody “circular indentation” to his stomach. The ring finger on one of the man’s hands had been detached from his body. He was reportedly conscious when police arrived, but said that he did not know the suspect well, and did not remember even speaking with him before the shooting, far less arguing.

Lawrence is said to have called more than one person, including a police officer, shortly after the shooting, to confess what he had done. He reportedly told them that he was going to turn himself in to police.

Footage from the restaurant’s security cameras show the two men displaying affection during the initial stages of their encounter, laughing and hugging each other. The interplay turned into aggression, until the two men were engaged in a physical altercation. Bystanders parted them but they began to fight again, until the staffer was seen falling to the ground and Lawrence was captured backing away with his arm outstretched. The footage then shows Lawrence getting into the passenger side of a dark colored sedan, which reverses away from the scene and ultimately flees the area.

One spent 9mm casing was recovered from the scene of the shooting by forensic technicians.?

When investigators performed a records check with the VIPD Firearm Office, they learned that Lawrence is not a licensed firearm holder in the territory.

When Lawrence called a detective and told him that he would not be turning himself in until Monday because his attorney was off island, the VIPD issued an all-point bulletin and published a wanted poster on social media. However, when Monday came, Lawrence duly turned himself in and was charged with attempted murder, first-degree assault, third-degree assault, mayhem, discharging or aiming a firearm, possession of an unlicensed firearm during a crime of violence, and unlawful possession of ammunition.

Bail was set at \$100,000 and he was remanded into custody to await his first court appearance.?

On that same Monday, a woman presented herself at the police station to say that she had been advised by Lawrence to turn in a firearm that he had in his possession. She was supposed to have given it to the suspect’s family member, but that person was not on island. The woman told police that she instead took the gun to her mother’s home and placed it in an abandoned vehicle. She then led officers to the location of the firearm. It was a black Taurus 9 mm handgun in a plastic bag, tucked under the driver’s seat of a blue 2004 Acura TL. The gun was unloaded.?

In court on Tuesday, Judge Ernest Morris found probable cause to uphold all charges against Lawrence. The judge modified his bail conditions to allow \$7000 of the total sum to be payable in cash in order for the defendant to be released ahead of trial, with the remainder signed as an unsecured bond. Once released from detention, Lawrence will be required to remain under 24 hour house arrest, with his location monitored electronically.?

His next court appearance is scheduled for July 10.