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59-Year-Old Ex-Kmart Manager Behind Bars After \$15,358 Fraud Scheme

Joanne Nickeo arrested for embezzlement and credit card fraud; remains in custody at John A. Bell Correctional Facility after failing to post \$35,000 bail

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Mugshot of Joanne Nickeo. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — Detectives from the V.I. Police Department's Economic Crimes Unit have arrested Joanne Nickeo, a former manager at the Kmart store in Sunny Isles Shopping Center, St. Croix, following an investigation into fraudulent activities involving the company's credit card.

The investigation, initiated on September 25, 2023, uncovered that Nickeo, who was entrusted with a company credit card (P-Card) for official purchases, had used the card to make

unauthorized transactions for personal gain on multiple occasions.

According to the investigation, Nickeo admitted to creating fake invoices online for her businesses, J&J Supplies, Sparkling Tots, and Sparkling World, which were not legitimate. She then fraudulently claimed reimbursement for these transactions, leading to a financial loss of \$15,358.83 for Kmart. These actions constituted a breach of trust in her role as a manager responsible for handling company funds.

On September 12, 2024, at approximately 10:28 a.m., detectives executed an arrest warrant at Nickeo's residence, taking the 59-year-old into custody without incident. She was charged with several offenses, including fraudulent use of a credit card, obtaining money by false pretense, embezzlement by employee, grand larceny, participating in fraud on creditors, and access to computer for fraudulent purposes.

Nickeo was subsequently transported to the Wilbur H. Francis Police Operation Building for processing and booking. Her bail was set at \$35,000. However, she was unable to post bail and was transferred to the John A. Bell Correctional Facility, where she remains in custody pending her advise of rights hearing.