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Man Arrested for Allegedly Robbing Homeless Man at Gunpoint of Social Security Funds

Benjamin Jackson is accused of robbing a homeless man at gunpoint at Market Square, stealing \$400 in Social Security funds. A judge upheld all charges, set bail at \$50,000, and imposed strict release conditions including area restrictions and weapons ban.

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Mugshot of Benjamin Jackson. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — One man is reportedly facing firearm and robbery charges, among others, for robbing at least one homeless man at gunpoint.

According to court documents, the man, who met police at the Schneider Regional Medical Center on April 17, told them that he had been sleeping at Market Square the night before when he was

awoken by someone –later identified as Benjamin Jackson – shining a flashlight in his face. The man told police that his assailant was armed with a long barreled revolver as well.

Jackson reportedly poked the homeless man in the chest and accused him of being a “rat”. He then reportedly unclipped the man's fanny pack and removed \$400 recently received from a Social Security payout. Having extracted the money, Jackson then reportedly discarded the bag and its other contents. The homeless man said that the man who robbed him went on to do something similar to another homeless individual as well.

The homeless man recounted having to call 911 after the robbery, as the stress from the incident triggered the onset of a medical crisis. He alerted police that Jackson had mentioned robbing other vulnerable people who may be receiving support payments soon.

Further investigation revealed surveillance footage of the square which appeared to corroborate at least some of the events recounted by the homeless man, and Jackson was spotted and detained early on the morning of April 18. He was arrested and charged with first-degree robbery, first-degree assault, possession of a deadly weapon, and possession of a firearm during a crime of violence.

Jackson appeared before Superior Court Magistrate Simone VanHolten-Turnbull on Saturday, who found probable cause to uphold all charges against him. The judge reduced bail to \$50,000 from the initial \$75,000, and ordered that Jackson be made to post 25% of the new bail requirement before being released ahead of trial.

Once free from detention, Jackson will be required to report to the probation office in person twice a week, and will be restricted from travel outside of the district. He will also be banned from using alcohol or other controlled substances and possessing firearms, ammunition, or dangerous weapons while the case is pending. Jackson is also banned from the Market Square area, and must stay at least 75 feet away from the alleged victim at all times.

The next court appearance for Jackson is scheduled for May 9.