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Woman Arrested for Pepper-Spraying Man During Dispute Over Child Custody

A custody-related dispute at the Ruby M. Rouse housing community led to the arrest of Idelys Valera-Feliz, who allegedly pepper-sprayed a man caring for his grandson. She was charged with assault and remains in custody pending court proceedings.

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Mugshot of Idelys Valera-Feliz. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A woman has been arrested and charged after allegedly pepper-spraying a man during a heated dispute involving a minor relative at the Ruby M. Rouse housing community on St. Croix.

According to police, the incident occurred last Thursday when a man reported being assaulted while caring for his grandson. Officers later met with the man at the Juan F. Luis Hospital, where he was being treated for his injuries. He explained that he had been watching his grandson while the child's mother — his daughter — was at work.

The man told investigators that while outside with the child, he saw Idelys Valera-Feliz, the child's paternal aunt, speaking to the boy in the parking lot. He noted that the child's parents are currently involved in a custody case and that the court has ruled the child should remain with his mother for the time being. Based on that, he decided to take the child back into the house.

He reported that Valera-Feliz followed him to the apartment, visibly upset and using profanity. He began recording her on his phone and said that as he sat down in a chair outside, she approached and pepper-sprayed him in the face. Responding officers stated they observed "what appeared to be a red chemical substance" on the man's left eye and glasses.

The following day, police located Valera-Feliz at her place of work, detained her, and brought her to the station for questioning. She told officers that the man had pushed her during the argument, which led her to deploy pepper spray. She reportedly said the push caused no injuries.

Valera-Feliz was arrested and charged with second-degree assault and disturbing the peace. Unable to post the court-set bail of \$50,000, she was remanded into custody pending her initial court appearance.

Court documents confirm that an advice of rights hearing was held Monday before Magistrate Venetia Velazquez, though the outcome of that hearing and any conditions for pre-trial release had not been made available at press time.