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Federal Agents Arrest Six Romanians on St. Thomas Following Tip on Illegal Reentry

Homeland Security Investigations acted on a tip and detained six Romanian nationals in Contant, St. Thomas, including individuals deported multiple times. Authorities say several are wanted on active warrants and four now face federal charges.

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ST. THOMAS — Federal law enforcement officials arrested six Romanian nationals on St. Thomas after receiving information that a group of individuals who had previously been deported had illegally re-entered the United States.

According to authorities, the information was received on December 11, prompting agents with Homeland Security Investigations to conduct surveillance at a residence in Contant where the

individuals were believed to be staying. Later that afternoon, agents followed two men who left the residence and made contact with them after they visited the Nisky Center.

The men were identified as Puiu Lacatus and Tiberiu-Ilie Rostas, both Romanian nationals who reportedly admitted they were in the United States illegally. Investigators said Lacatus had previously been deported twice, in 2019 and again in 2024. He told agents that he flew from Paris to St. Maarten in November, then traveled by boat to Tortola in the British Virgin Islands before taking a ferry to St. Thomas. HSI officials said Lacatus is named in more than one active warrant.

Agents said Rostas was deported earlier this year, in July, and also has active warrants for his arrest.

After the initial arrests, agents returned to the Contant residence to retrieve medication for Lacatus. While there, they encountered Amalia-Maria Lacatusu, who was found outside the home. Investigators identified her as a Romanian national who had been deported from Louisiana in January of this year. Like the others, Lacatusu is also reportedly wanted in connection with multiple offenses.

Agents later stopped three additional men after they left the residence. All three reportedly identified themselves as Romanian nationals with no legal status in the United States. One of those men was identified as Beni Lacatusu, whose immigration records reportedly show prior deportations from Texas in 2019 and again in 2025. Authorities said he, too, is named in more than one active warrant.

Of the six Romanian nationals detained, four have since been formally charged. The remaining two are being held at the ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations office, where they are expected to face charges. Lacatus, Rostas, Beni Lacatusu, and Amalia-Maria Lacatusu have been assigned public defenders and are scheduled to appear before U.S. Magistrate Judge Alan Teague on Wednesday. At that hearing, the court will determine whether they will remain detained while awaiting trial.