

VIPD Reports Rise in Child Sexual Assault Cases, Creates St. Thomas Special Victims Unit

VIPD says domestic violence drove one-third of cases in the St. Thomas district in 2025, while reported sexual assaults involving minor children also increased, prompting the department to create a Domestic Violence and Special Victims Unit in October.

Crime / **Published On March 16, 2026 08:09 AM /**

Staff Consortium **March 16, 2026**

Image not found or type unknown



The V.I. Police Department's 2025 recap identified domestic violence and crimes involving vulnerable victims as a major concern in the St. Thomas district, where police said one in every three cases last year was domestic violence related.

Lieutenant Richard Dominguez, chief of detectives for the St. Thomas-Water Island-St. John district, said on Sunday the district also saw an increase in reported sexual assaults involving

minor children in 2025. In response, he said the department created a Domestic Violence and Special Victims Unit in the St. Thomas district in October 2025.

According to Dominguez, detectives assigned to that unit have specialized training and tools to manage those cases more effectively and provide what he described as the highest level of support to victims of those crimes. He said the unit has already seen excellent results and that police expect those results to improve in 2026 with additional training opportunities and collaboration with community groups and victim advocates.

The concerns highlighted by Dominguez came as he described a broader violence picture in the district that included homicides tied not only to targeted gun violence and interpersonal disputes, but also to domestic violence incidents. His remarks placed domestic abuse and sexual violence within the center of the district's public safety challenges rather than at the margins of them.

The St. Croix district also reported a notable domestic violence caseload during the 2025 recap. Lieutenant Marisol Colon said the Criminal Investigation Bureau on St. Croix had 445 cases assigned in 2025, including 42 domestic violence cases. While Colon's presentation focused heavily on homicide investigations, arrests, firearm seizures and case resolutions, the domestic violence figure added to the portrait of how frequently such cases continue to reach detectives territory-wide.

The creation of the St. Thomas Domestic Violence and Special Victims Unit stands out as one of the clearest structural changes announced in the recap. Rather than presenting domestic violence and sex crimes involving minors as routine caseload items, police framed them as issues requiring specialized investigators, dedicated victim support and closer work with outside stakeholders.

The update suggests that for VIPD, one of the most urgent law-enforcement challenges in 2025 was not limited to murders and shootings. It also involved violence in homes, crimes against children, and the need for a stronger, more focused response for victims whose cases often require specialized handling and long-term support.