

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Accused of Punching Ex-Girlfriend and Causing Her to Be Thrown From Vehicle

Police say Burke pushed the woman down, broke her prescription glasses, punched her repeatedly in the mouth and drove in a manner that caused her to fall from the vehicle; security footage allegedly corroborated her account, and all charges were upheld.

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Janeka Simon **July 27, 2026**



Mugshot of Demirtri Burke. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — A judge has upheld domestic-violence, reckless-endangerment and obstruction-related charges against Demirtri Burke after police said neighborhood security footage corroborated his ex-girlfriend's account that he assaulted her, broke her

glasses and drove in a manner that caused her to be thrown from a vehicle.

Magistrate Simone VanHolten-Turnbull found probable cause Wednesday to sustain all charges against Burke and set bail at \$1,000, with \$350 required in cash to secure his release and the remainder signed as an unsecured bond.

The case stems from a July 20 incident that came to the attention of police after the woman returned home with blood on her face following a visit to Burke's residence. A relative saw her injuries and called authorities.

Responding officers spoke with the woman, who said the confrontation began as she prepared to leave Burke's home.

According to her account, Burke accused her of accessing his phone and taking photographs of its contents. He demanded that she delete the alleged photographs, while she denied taking them and said she did not know the password needed to access the device.

The verbal dispute escalated when Burke allegedly pushed her to the ground, removed her prescription glasses from her face and threw them onto the concrete.

The woman located the glasses and discovered they were broken.

The woman told police she nevertheless accepted a ride from Burke because she needed to return home.

As they approached her residence, Burke allegedly became angry, yelled obscenities and ordered her out of the vehicle before punching her several times in the mouth.

She said Burke then stopped the vehicle, exited and went to the passenger side, where he attempted to pull her from the car.

When he was unsuccessful, Burke allegedly returned to the driver's seat, opened the passenger door from inside and drove in a way that caused the woman to be thrown from the vehicle.

Her father reportedly heard her screaming and came outside, where he found her bleeding on the ground.

A few houses away, Burke's vehicle stopped and he allegedly threw several of the woman's belongings onto the street. Her relatives then called 911.

Police said neighborhood security cameras recorded the incident and corroborated the woman's account.

Burke Tasered During Traffic Stop

The following day, members of the Special Operations Bureau stopped Burke while he was driving.

Police said he repeatedly failed to follow officers' instructions, and the encounter ended with him being tasered.

Burke was taken to the hospital for treatment and later transported to the Richard Callwood Command police station for questioning.

During the interview, Burke reportedly told officers that his ex-girlfriend threw the first punch after refusing to leave the vehicle when they reached her home.

He allegedly admitted striking her in return before she exited the vehicle and he drove away. Burke also acknowledged stopping to throw her phone and other belongings from the vehicle, according to police.

Seven Charges Upheld

Burke was arrested and charged with simple assault and two counts of destruction of property as acts of domestic violence.

He was additionally charged with disturbance of the peace, reckless endangerment, disobeying a lawful order and interfering with an officer discharging his duty.

Burke was remanded into custody pending his advice-of-rights hearing.

If released, he must report to the probation office in person twice each week and comply with the other standard bail conditions imposed by the court.

His next court appearance is scheduled for August 7.