

Father Faces Manslaughter, Child Neglect and Abuse Charges in Death of 4-Year-Old Jeziah Richardson

VIPD arrested 27-year-old Roland Richardson III Tuesday, one month after his 4-year-old son, Jeziah Azir Richardson, died from a gunshot wound. He faces involuntary manslaughter, child neglect, child abuse and aggravated child abuse and neglect charges.

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Mugshot of Roland Richardson. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — The father of 4-year-old Jeziah Azir Richardson has been arrested one month after the child [died from a gunshot wound](#), with the V.I. Police Department now describing the incident as an accidental shooting and charging 27-year-old Roland Richardson III with involuntary manslaughter and multiple child-related offenses.

VIPD Director of Communications Glen Dratte confirmed Richardson's arrest Tuesday following an investigation by the Criminal Investigation Bureau.

Richardson was charged with involuntary manslaughter, child neglect, child abuse, and aggravated child abuse and neglect.

Bail was set at \$50,000, and Richardson was remanded to the John A. Bell Adult Correctional Facility pending his advice-of-rights hearing.

The arrest represents a significant development from VIPD's initial account of the child's death.

When the Consortium first reported the incident on July 16, police said only that a four-year-old boy had suffered a gunshot wound and that the Major Crime Unit was investigating the circumstances. At that stage, VIPD said no determination had been made about what had occurred.

According to police, the St. Croix 911 Emergency Call Center received the initial report at approximately 7:01 p.m. on Thursday, July 16.

The child was transported to Juan F. Luis Hospital for emergency medical treatment, where medical personnel attempted to save his life. He ultimately died from his injuries.

VIPD has now identified the child as Jeziah Azir Richardson and says the shooting was accidental.

The department's latest statement does not provide additional details about how the shooting occurred or what evidence developed during the monthlong investigation that led detectives to arrest the child's father.

Following the Criminal Investigation Bureau's investigation, Richardson was taken into custody Tuesday, Aug. 18.

He remains detained pending his first court appearance.

VIPD also extended condolences to Jeziah's family and loved ones following the child's death.