

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Policewoman Punches Child's Father In Face, Charged With Assault, Battery

VIC News / **Published On February 22, 2015 10:06 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **February 22, 2015**



[Correction]: *An earlier version of this story reported that Officer Benton was terminated from her job. In fact, she is on administrative leave pending an investigation into the incident.*

Police officer Ashley Benton of St. Croix was relieved of her duties, and charged with simple assault and battery after she allegedly punched the father of her child in the face outside a local bar at around 4:01 a.m. Saturday, VIPD Public Information Officer Kevin Jackson announced.

The victim told police he was sitting at a local bar when he was approached by a female individual, who was unknown to him, who told him he needed to take care of his child. The victim asked the individual to identify herself, at which time she informed him that she was a police detective. The unidentified detective proceeded to walk the victim toward a private vehicle waiting outside.

Once at the private vehicle, the victim saw another woman, identified as Benton, sitting in the passenger's seat. According to the victim, Benton stepped out of the vehicle and began arguing with him. The argument escalated to the point of Benton punching him in the face. The victim then phoned the 911 Emergency Call Center and made his way to the Ancilmo Marshall Command at about 4:24 a.m. and filed a report.

Benton, who was among a number of police honorees in 2013 for exceptional service and awarded the Combat Cross, was immediately relieved of her duties, and charged with simple assault and battery. Benton was released on her own recognizance by Magistrate Jessica Gallivan of the Superior Court.

The incident is being investigated by detectives with the Domestic Violence Unit and agents of the Internal Affairs Unit.