

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Sex Offender Punished For Failing To Keep Registration Current

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ST. THOMAS -- A judge sentenced Daniel Cove, above, to two years in prison for failing to keep his sexual offender registration current, V.I. Department of Justice Public Media Officer Corliss Smithen announced today.

"It is a pattern that you have and it is very troubling," V.I. Superior Court Judge Renée Gumbs Carty told Cove on Thursday as she handed down her punishment on him.

Cove, 33, was arrested last October, a day after the Department of Justice (DOJ) Bureau of Investigation launched an initiative dubbed "Operation Ponderosa," during which DOJ special agents conducted unannounced inspections of certain registered sexual

offenders on the east end of St. Thomas for the purpose of verifying their locations and other personal information.

Agents learned that Cove had not kept his registration current, as required by law and so, they commenced a manhunt for him and upon locating him, Cove was charged with failure to keep sexual offender registration current. His bail was set at \$1,000, but he remained behind bars pending his sentencing as he was unable to post bail. Cove accepted a plea deal offered by Attorney General Claude Earl Walker, which recommended a one-year prison term with six months suspended, and pleaded guilty to the crime.

At his sentencing hearing, Cove received a two-year prison sentence with one year suspended and credit for the four months and four days he has already served. Gumbs Carty also ordered that after his release from prison, Cove has to be placed on supervised probation, he has to complete 100 hours of community service and he has to undergo psychiatric counseling.

"I apologize for my actions," he told the court.

Cove moved to St. Croix in 2002, then later moved to St. Thomas. He was registered as a sex offender in the district of St. Thomas-St. John, but had ended up in the St. Croix district and agents from the Department of Justice were actively working to locate him. On Oct. 4, 2016, Cove walked into the St. Croix office of the DOJ and turned himself over to authorities.

His apprehension on St. Croix came just a few days after AG Walker had revised an existing policy requiring that all sex offenders in the territory now notify DOJ even when traveling between these islands. The case was prosecuted by Assistant Attorney General Stephanie Bowles.