

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Man Pleads Guilty To Carjacking And Firearm Offenses, Faces Minimum 22-Year Prison Sentence, Minimum \$500,000 Fine

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ST. CROIX -- Joel G. Rivera, 33, of St. Croix, pled guilty on April 18 in District Court to one count of using a firearm during a violent crime, and one count of carjacking, United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert has announced.

The firearm offense carries a mandatory minimum of 7 years imprisonment, a maximum fine of up to \$250,000, and a term of supervised release up to 5 years. The carjacking offense carries a prison sentence of up to 15 years, a maximum fine of up to \$250,000, and a term of supervised release up to 5 years. Sentencing is set for August 21, 2019.

According to court documents, in the early morning hours of September 10, 2017, the defendant, along with two co-defendants, broke into the home of Stephen O'Dea and Kathryn Duncan, while brandishing a firearm. The defendants physically assaulted Mr. O'Dea and threatened to kill the couple while demanding money. The defendants forced the couple at gunpoint into the rear seat of Mr. O'Dea's Toyota Tacoma pick-up truck and drove to the location where Mr. O'Dea had left his wallet. After obtaining the wallet, the defendants fled in the pick- up truck and Mr. O'Dea's Jeep Wrangler that was located at his residence. In addition to the vehicles, defendants stole \$200 in currency, two iPhones valued at \$600 each, and an iPad valued at \$200.

The Virgin Islands Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigations investigated the case. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel H. Huston.

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