

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Facing Five Years in Federal Jail for Smuggling Marijuana in Luggage to St. Croix

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85 pounds of marijuana confiscated at Nashville, Tennessee Airport.

ST. CROIX — An Arizona man is facing up to five years in federal prison for smuggling marijuana into St. Croix through luggage on a flight from San Francisco, announced U.S. Attorney for the Virgin Islands Gretchen C.F. Shapper on Friday.

Armando Antonio Mena, age 29 of Arizona, pleaded guilty on Friday in federal court to possession of marijuana with intent to distribute.

According to court documents, Armando Antonio Mena traveled to St. Croix on May 27, 2020, on a flight that originated in San Francisco, California. On that flight, he transported checked luggage containing twenty-two individually wrapped vacuum sealed bags that contained approximately ten kilograms of marijuana, the amount and packaging being consistent with drug distribution.

Mena faces up to five years' incarceration and a fine of up to \$250,000. A sentencing date has been set for June 9, 2021, according to the release.

The case was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations and U.S. Customs and Border Patrol. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Melissa P. Ortiz.