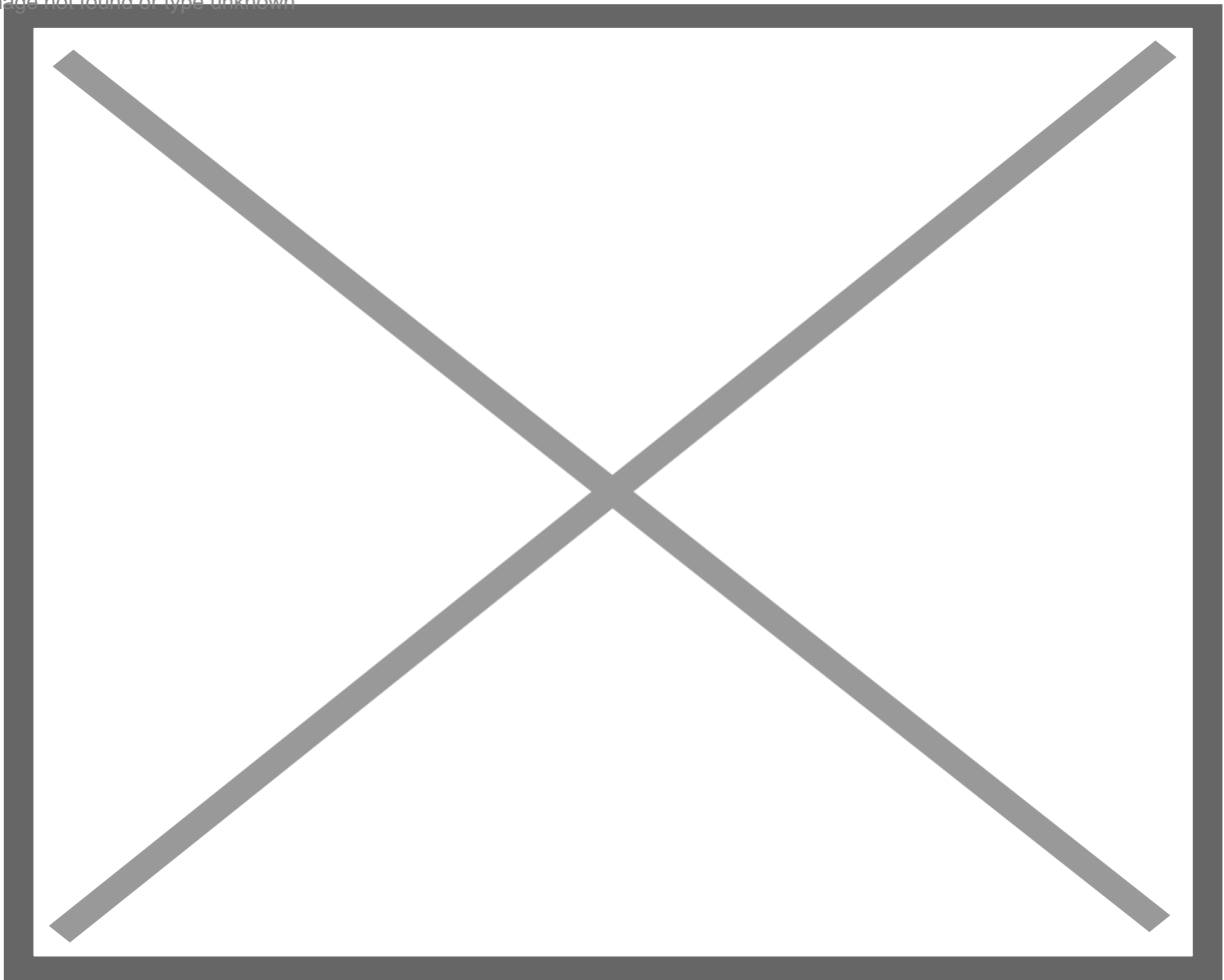


# St. Croix Man Already Being Held on Local and Federal Firearms Charges Sentenced to 14 Months for Intent to Distribute Cocaine

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ST. CROIX — Malachi Benjamin, 25, has been sentenced to fourteen months and ten days by District Judge Robert A. Molloy on his conviction of possession with intent to distribute cocaine, United States Attorney Gretchen Shappert announced Thursday. Judge Molloy also sentenced Benjamin to three years of supervised release and \$100 special assessment.

According to court records, on June 14, 2018, V.I. Police Department officers conducted a traffic stop of a vehicle operated by Glenn David with Benjamin in the front passenger seat. After the traffic stop, officers approached Benjamin to advise him that he was a person of interest in recent double homicide on St. Croix, and Benjamin responded by immediately fleeing the scene on foot. After Benjamin fled the scene, David, the driver and owner of the vehicle, granted the officers

permission to search his vehicle.

A forensic team of VIPD officers later recovered three pre-packaged baggies of suspected cocaine hidden inside of a Pepperidge Farm container. The suspected cocaine was recovered from the passenger side floor of the vehicle where Benjamin had been seated.

A field test conducted on the suspected cocaine yielded a positive result. The forensic team also collected buccal swaps from the cocaine baggies that were hidden inside of the Pepperidge Farm container for DNA analysis. When compared with DNA previously collected from Benjamin, a DNA laboratory confirmed that Benjamin was the source of DNA collected from the cocaine wrappings.

Benjamin is also charged in the Virgin Islands Superior Court with unlawful firearm possession charges, and in the U.S. District Court with drugs and firearms conspiracy charges.

This case was investigated by Drug Enforcement Administration and the Virgin Islands Police Department.