

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Friend of Alleged Rape Suspect Appears Before Court for Aiding and Abetting Charges

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Mugshot of Jahmanie G. Morton By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — A St. Croix man who allegedly aided and abetted another man to commit an allegedly vicious rape crime was himself charged with multiple criminal offenses and appeared for his advisement hearing Monday.

The suspect, Jahmanie G. Morton, was charged with disturbing the peace by fighting, first-degree burglary, aiding and abetting and third-degree assault, aiding and abetting as he was the accompanying friend of Stedroy Lloyd Francis, Jr., the suspect in the [alleged rape and assault against a female victim](#) on July 15.

Morton appeared before Jomo Meade via teleconference in the custody of the Bureau of Corrections on Monday for his advisement hearing.

Prosecuting attorney Karabo Molyneaux-Molloy argued that, according to the fact sheet, Morton told the victim, "This is your fault. You're the one that caused this. You should have never opened your mouth," while Francis was waving the gun at the suspect and pointing it at her head and private part.

Molyneaux-Molloy said that the behavior constituted probable cause for an unauthorized possession of a firearm during the commission of a crime of violence, aiding and abetting charge. Attn. Molyneaux-Molloy further stated that Morton had knowledge of Francis's possession of the firearms and aided and abetted by failing to report them.

According to the sworn testimony of V.I.P.D. Detective Buckley, Francis was in possession of the firearms and officers were not notified of how they arrived at the victim's residence. Det. Buckley also had no knowledge of whether Morton provided Francis with firearms.

Judge Meade argued against the charges and said, "If he possessed one of them and then he handed it to Mr. Francis, then of course you can argue that he aided and abetted." Therefore, Judge Meade did not find probable cause for that charge and removed it. Additionally, the court didn't find probable cause for the failure to report a firearm obtained outside the V.I., aiding and abetting charge, and therefore said charge was struck.

Bail was originally set at \$100,000 in the arrest report, however the suspect's council, Attorney Yolan Brow-Ross, requested a reduction to \$75,000 in an unsecured bond with 24-hour house arrest and a third-party custodian. Attn. Molyneaux-Molloy agreed with the bail condition that Morton post 10 percent (or \$7,500) with 24-hour house arrest and without electronic monitoring, or fully unsecured bail with house arrest and electronic monitoring.

With nothing to suggest that Morton would be a flight risk considering this was his first criminal offense and having no gainful employment, Judge Meade ruled that Morton be put under 24-hour house arrest without electronic monitoring. Morton's third-party custodian put up their property in lieu of bail.