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Corrections Officer Facing Decades in Jail After a Bullet From His Firearm Killed a 9-Year-Old Boy

Crime / **Published On October 21, 2021 11:32 AM /**

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Mugshot of Jahmeel Williams. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX- Bail has been set in the amount of \$75,000 for a corrections officer charged with failure to safely store a firearm and child abuse, following the fatal 2019 shooting of a 9-year-old.

According to a press release from the VIPD, Jahmeel Williams of Barren Spot was arrested on Tuesday. The 39-year-old's arrest stems from investigations into the shooting death of 9-year-old Christino Gonzalez. Gonzalez was shot while playing outside Croixville Apartments on November 11th, 2019. Reports indicate that the young victim sustained one gunshot wound to the back of his head. At the time, a shell casing was reportedly recovered and a 15-year-old suspect was initially detained. Gonzalez's death was investigated jointly by the Juvenile and Criminal

Investigation Bureaus.

Investigations later determined that the firearm which delivered the fatal shot was licensed to Jahmeel Williams, who allegedly failed to properly secure it. Following his arrest, Williams' bail was set at \$75,000 and he was released to a third party custodian pending his advisement hearing on Wednesday.

Williams appeared virtually before Judge Ernest Morris Jr. who advised him that if he is found guilty of the firearm related charge, he faces a maximum of two years incarceration, a maximum fine of \$2,500 and forfeiture of the license and firearm. Williams also faces a maximum sentence of 20 years and a minimum fine of \$500 if convicted on the charge of child abuse. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Judge decided that Williams could maintain his release by signing an unsecured bond of \$75,000. This means he does not have to post any cash. He will reside with a court-approved, third-party custodian pending the conclusion of the case.

Williams will be placed on administrative leave without pay.