

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Convicted of Grand Larceny in First Jury Trial Since Covid-19 Pandemic For Stealing Minor's iPhone

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Mugshot of Ala Zatar By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER AND POWER AUTHORITY

V.I. Attorney General Denise George has announced that the territory's first jury trial held in the V.I. Superior court since Covid-induced closures concluded with a verdict Thursday.

In the case of The People of the Virgin Islands vs Ala Zatar, the court has found the defendant guilty on all counts of felony grand larceny and possession of stolen property.

Jury selection began on Monday and the trial began on Wednesday. Closing arguments were held Thursday. The jury deliberated for two hours before returning guilty verdicts. Sentencing for Zatar is scheduled for December 9.

According to the Affidavit, a minor and her mother reported that on November 30, 2019, the minor, accompanied by her toddler sister went into Smart Mart Gas Station and convenience store located by Krum Bay Road, St. Thomas to purchase miscellaneous items. While shopping, the minor placed her iPhone XR cellphone, valued at \$1,000 down on a box below the counter inside of the store. She then paid for the items and left the store subconsciously forgetting her cellphone on the counter.

When the minor arrived home, she realized the cellphone was missing and called her cellphone number, however she noticed it was turned off. She ran back to the store to search for the cellphone to no avail. She was eventually able to contact the store owner who reviewed the store's surveillance footage and sent a clip to the minor's mother. The footage showed Zatar taking the cellphone and placing it in his pocket.

On December 25, 2019, Zatar was located at Tap and Still in Red Hook, advised of his rights, and transported to the Richard Callwood Command.

A.G. George congratulated Assistant Attorneys General John Barraco and Kimberly Riley who successfully prosecuted the case, along with the assistance of the case agent, Virgin Islands Police Department Detective Tamika Beazer. "Justice was served," she said.