

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Attorney Seeks Leniency For Homeless Man Caught Stealing Food Items

Crime / **Published On January 12, 2022 06:25 AM /**

Amanie Mathurin **January 12, 2022**



Mugshot of Dale King. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — An attorney has asked the court to show compassion to a homeless man caught stealing food items.

Dale King is charged with third-degree burglary and petty larceny which carry maximum sentences of 5 years and 1 year respectively. He is also charged with damage to property which is punishable by up to one year in prison and a fine not exceeding \$200.

Police were dispatched to a food establishment on January 8 in reference to a possible burglary. There, they made contact with the owner who stated that his business was broken into by a vagrant who frequents the area. He also told police that the individual was currently in the area wearing a red shirt.

The businessman then showed police a video of the individual on his cellphone which was recorded by his camera system. The recording showed a man walking and searching the kitchen area at around 6:51 p.m. on January 6th. As a result of the holiday, the establishment was closed at the time. While watching the video an officer recognized and identified the man as Dale King, based on a previous arrest for burglary. The owner stated that King had gained entry through the western door of the business and that he had taken an unknown amount of money from the tip jar, a loaf of bread and a plastic bag from the kitchen. He also said that King forced the refrigerator door open, breaking the retracting mechanism used to keep it closed and removed more than \$50 worth of drinks. He then placed them in the plastic bag he had taken.

According to the probable cause fact sheet, the businessman showed officers multiple recordings of King inside the establishment on different dates, as far back as December 19th, 2021. He said King has stolen over \$500 in goods and cash across the multiple times he broke into the establishment and the refrigerator. Officers subsequently made contact with King and he was arrested without incident.

According to police, King admitted to breaking into the business, taking some money and filling a bag with drinks "to the point it burst when he was walking." King also stated that he was sorry for stealing the items. He was transported to the Wilbur H. Francis command where he was processed. Unable to post bail which was set at \$25,000, he was remanded to the Golden Grove Adult Correctional Facility.

King appeared for a virtual hearing on Monday where attorney Amelia Joseph told the court that he was homeless, and asked that compassion be shown given that he stole food and drinks. Joseph suggested that it was almost an indictment on society that a homeless man has to steal food to survive. She further noted that she has attempted to assist him in finding a place to stay through the nonprofit organization Collective Collaboration. Joseph explained that at the time of the hearing she was unable to offer a third-party custodian or address and was throwing her client at the mercy of the court, asking them to consider his circumstances.

Assistant Attorney General Amie Simpson noted that her only concern was whether or not King would be able to stay away from the store, given allegations that he had repeatedly stolen from the business. In the absence of a suitable address or third-party custodian being provided, Judge Ernest Morris concluded that a subsequent bail hearing would be scheduled for Wednesday to allow the attorney to make the necessary arrangements. However, in the meantime, King's bail will remain set in the amount of \$25,000 fully secured. Upon posting, he must provide the court with a phone number and address where he will reside. He is also required to surrender his passport, stay away from the establishment and not have any contact with any victims or witnesses in the matter.