

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Who Allegedly Murdered His Roommate and Buried Him in a Shallow Grave Facing Life Sentence; \$200,000 Bail Condition Upheld

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Troy Massoth, center right, is being escorted by a V.I.P.D. officer after being extradited to the USVI. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — A 60-year-old man is facing life imprisonment for allegedly murdering his roommate and burying his body in a shallow grave back in 2021.

Troy Massoth appeared for a virtual hearing in St. Thomas on Monday after he was apprehended in Oakland California on January 31st, 2022. At the time of his arrest, Massoth was reportedly attempting to board a flight destined for San Diego.

According to police, the suspect fled St. Thomas in the wake of a heinous crime. Massoth is accused of murdering 69-year-old Thomas Carpenter, whose remains were identified through DNA testing. According to previous statements from police, Carpenter's decomposing body was found in a shallow grave in Smith Bay in September 2021. VIPD made the grim discovery after a resident alerted police to a foul odor in the area. Upon investigations, officers discovered a grave that appeared freshly dug at the time. Inside that shallow grave was Carpenter's body which was concealed within a garbage bag tied with cloth.

Massoth now faces up to life in prison without parole, if prosecutors can prove their case against him on the charge of first-degree murder. He also faces a slew of other charges including criminal abuse of an elder, financial exploitation of an elderly person, obtaining credit card by theft and attempting to obtain money by false pretenses. Massoth was also charged for burying a dead body in a location other than a designated cemetery.



The defendant, who has three prior drug-related arrests was born in California and according to his attorney, he has gone back and forth between his home state and the Virgin Islands over the last two years. Alexia Furlow represented the accused murderer at his advisement hearing on Monday, where she asked that his release be granted on the posting of 10 percent of his bail which was set at \$200,000. However, Assistant V.I. Attorney General Brenda Scales requested that bail remain as set due to the seriousness of the charges and the strength of the state's case. Scales further highlighted that Massoth left the jurisdiction after Carpenter's remains were discovered.

Judge Paula Norkiatis took this piece of information into consideration before she decided not to modify Massoth's bail conditions. She emphasized that the accused is an "entire flight risk," affirming that he will not be granted a 10 percent provision.

If Massoth is able to secure his release on the posting of \$200,000 he will be placed on house arrest with electronic monitoring. He will also be required to submit all his travel documents to the court. The hearing concluded with Judge Norkiatis expressing that it was extremely concerning to the court that Massoth was allegedly in a position of trust and confidence with an elderly individual who is now dead.