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Inmate Arrested and Charged For Allegedly Assaulting Female Corrections Officer, Punching Her Several Times

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Mugshot of Kareem Joseph. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — An inmate of the Alexander Farrelly Criminal Justice Center in St. Thomas has been charged with aggravated assault and battery against a corrections officer.

Kareem Joseph is also charged with disturbance of the peace and interfering with an officer discharging her duties. The charges stem from an alleged incident on the morning of February 5 while the officer was conducting a headcount at the Bureau of Corrections Criminal Justice Complex.

The assault on February 5 was not the first time that Joseph had allegedly attacked a corrections officer. In Nov. 2019, Joseph, age 38 at the time, was [arrested for the same offense](#).

According to the probable cause fact sheet, the officer proceeded into Joseph's cell to conduct a wellness check after she called out to him several times and did not receive a response. Once inside the cell, she found that Joseph had a bed sheet and blanket covering him from head to toe so that he was not visible. She also observed clothing covering the light fixture of the cell making the area dark. The officer then called out to Joseph again while in the cell but he did not respond. According to her statement, she subsequently pulled the sheet down and gently placed her open left hand on him, calling out his name once more.

Joseph snatched the sheets back, spun around and brushed the officer's hand off him. She immediately apologized and explained that she had only placed her hand on him to conduct a welfare check. The woman then exited the cell and continued her duties. However, she heard a loud banging noise and then saw Joseph standing in the doorway mumbling. When the officer walked over to the open doorway Joseph stated "Don't [expletive] touch me, I don't like people touching me." Based on the officer's statement, she reiterated her apologies but Joseph replied "I will poke up your [expletive]."

Although the officer instructed the inmate to retire to his cell due to his behavior and threats, Joseph refused to adhere. Instead, he retorted "put me in my cell" before swearing at the officer and also telling her "you best call for back up." He then walked up to her and stood in her face causing her to step back and order him into his cell yet again. As Joseph began to walk away the officer radioed for the supervisor on duty and continued to order the inmate into his cell. However, Joseph continued pacing and using profanities.

The fact sheet states that the officer then walked up alongside the inmate, extended her forearm, and ordered him to his cell. In response, he allegedly spun around and struck her with a closed fist repeatedly to the side of her face, causing her to become disoriented. The officer noted that she was in the area alone and began to defend herself as she was in fear for her life. Other officers then arrived and Joseph was restrained and placed in his cell.