

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Who Allegedly Fired Several Gunshots at Occupied Home in Estate Whim Was on Probation For Federal Offenses; Judge Keeps Bail at \$500,000 Cash

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Mugshot of Rusiel Encarnacion. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — Rusiel Encarnacion appeared for his advisement hearing on Wednesday where he was informed that he faces a maximum of 25 years in prison if convicted of attempted murder in the first degree. Meanwhile, the charge of unauthorized possession of a firearm during the commission of a crime of violence carries a maximum sentence of 20 years and a \$25,000 fine. The other three charges against Encarnacion carry maximum sentences of 5 and 7 years.

At Wednesday's hearing, it was noted that Encarnacion was recently released from federal prison and was on probation for federal offenses. Attorney Leslie Davis stated that the defendant is indigent and asked the court to allow his release on the posting of an unsecured bond valued at \$500,000. Davis further suggested that Encarnacion be placed on 24-hour house arrest upon his release. Judge Ernest Morris affirmed that the attorney's motion did not present the court with sufficient security and it was therefore denied. The judge stated that Encarnacion will only be released on the posting of \$500,000 cash and that if he is able to post the sum, he will be placed on 24-hour house arrest with electronic GPS monitoring.

He will only be allowed to leave his residence to attend court proceedings, meet his attorney or seek emergency medical treatment. The defendant has been ordered not to leave the island without the court's written permission and is required to maintain a distance of at least 1000 feet from any alleged victims in the matter.

Encarnacion was arrested and charged on Tuesday in connection with a reckless endangerment incident in Estate Whim that occurred on February 20.

The V.I.P.D. said Encarnacion, 39 was arrested at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday by members of the Criminal Investigation and Special Operation Bureaus who followed up on information received regarding the whereabouts of Encarnacion.

The CIB and SOB teams converged on Encarnacion's residence in Estate Whim and arrested him without incident, the V.I.P.D. said via release.

He was charged with first-degree attempted murder, unauthorized possession of a firearm during the commission of a crime of violence, discharging or aiming a firearm, first-degree reckless endangerment, and unauthorized possession of ammunition. The arrest warrant that authorized his arrest was signed by Superior Court Judge Ernest Morris.

St. Croix Deputy Chief Uston Cornelius stated, "We thank the community as you continue to work with us [and] we continue to work you."

The Consortium on [Sunday reported on the matter](#). According to police, Encarnacion was allegedly party to an incident that resulted in a home located in Estate Whim sustaining damage from gunshots fired from a high-powered rifle. The incident placed the home's occupants in danger of being killed or injured, said police, who added that the reckless endangerment incident was perpetrated "by and under the direction of Rusiel Encarnacion."