

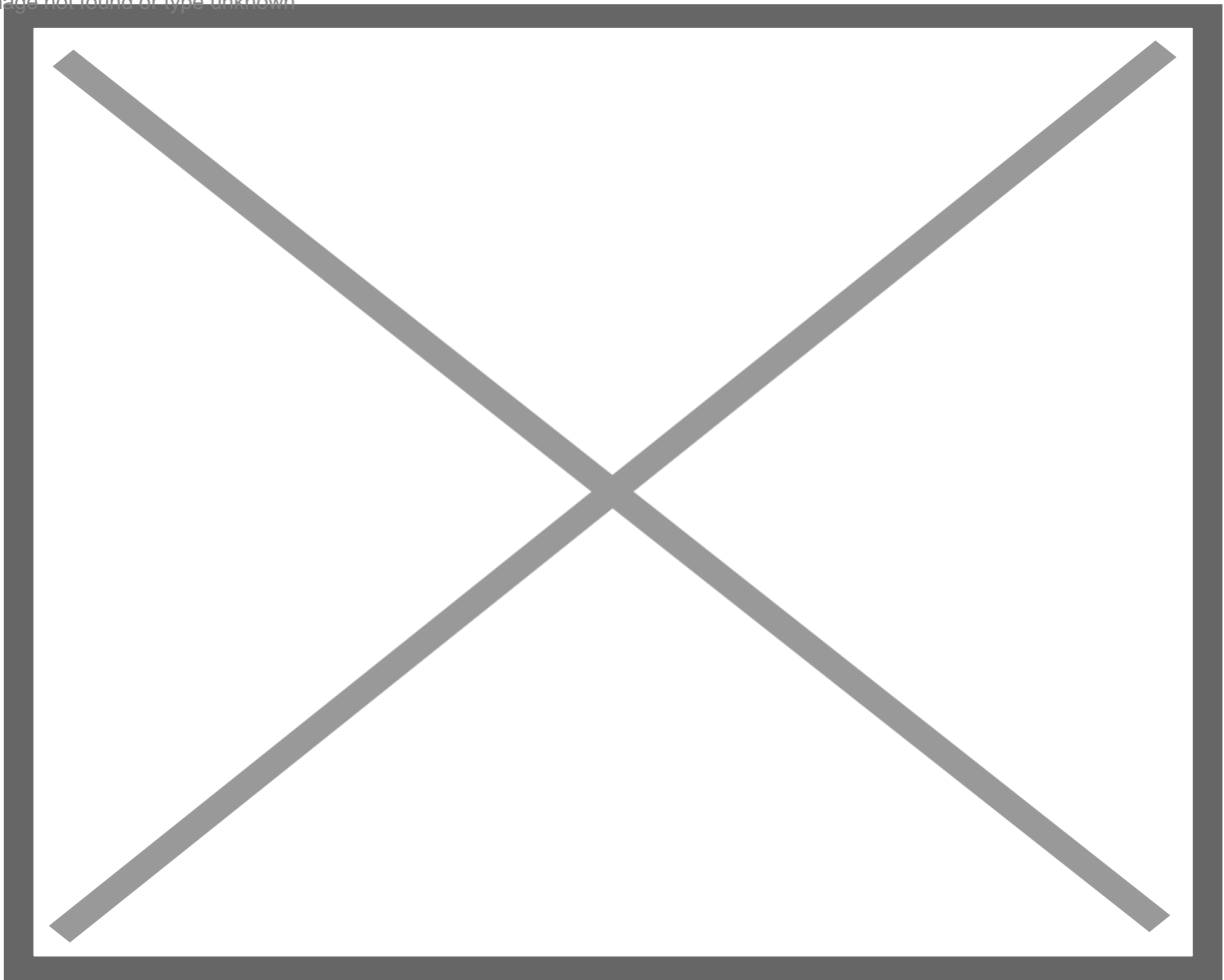
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Former Home Depot Employee Arrested For Allegedly Stealing Up to \$90,000 From Customer's Credit Card Between 2019-2021

Crime / **Published On November 10, 2022 04:59 AM /**

Nisha Charles **November 10, 2022**

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Mugshot of Wendy Roberts. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — A former Home Depot employee on St. Croix appeared before a V.I. Superior Court judge Wednesday to face charges after allegedly stealing between \$80,000 to \$90,000 from a Home Depot customer's credit card in the span of nearly two years.

Wendy Roberts, age 41, was arrested Tuesday morning at Plaza Extra East without incident. She was charged with obtaining money by false pretense, grand larceny and access to a computer for fraudulent purposes.

Her arrest follows a report filed by Home Depot in reference to an incident that occurred between October 2019 and July 2021.

According to the documents before the court, the V.I. Police Department's Economic Crime Unit initiated an investigation into the incident on October 12, 2021, when detectives made contact with a representative at Home Depot.

Home Depot stated that at some point in 2021, a case was initiated by the company's Central Investigation Team in Atlanta, where it was discovered that multiple orders were being refunded to a specific credit card from October 17, 2019. After a review of the case, Home Depot was able to confirm that no merchandise was present while the transaction occurred, and Roberts — a coordinator for special orders at Home Depot at the time — was the individual that the money was being refunded to.

Roberts's duties included taking special orders and processing credit card transactions.

Home Depot's investigating found that Roberts would make the unauthorized transactions by reopening orders that were already closed for several months, then refunding the money to her personal credit card. The investigation further found that the transactions were made when there were no customers present at the service desk.

Roberts was interviewed by Home Depot staff about the incident and she admitted that from October 2019, she had been refunding money from the service desk cash register to her credit card. She admitted doing so for at least two years to pay for her medical expenses. Home Depot is claiming that Roberts stole between \$80,000-\$90,000 for the nearly two-year duration.

The company said the surveillance footage only goes back three to four months, and at the time showed Roberts conducting an unauthorized transaction of \$5,000.

Detectives were provided with records of Roberts's unauthorized refund orders from October 17, 2019 to July 23, 2021 and several photographs of her at the service desk committing the act.

On October 14, 2021, Roberts was interviewed by detectives and admitted to making the unauthorized transactions at least twice a month. She was asked if anyone else was involved in the transactions and she said no. She said she did not know how much money was refunded but that it was used to pay medical bills as well as discover credit cards. Detectives showed Roberts photos of a woman at the Home Depot service desk conducting the unauthorized transactions. She was asked if it was her and she said yes.

On January 7, 2022, a subpoena was served on Roberts's records at Bank of St. Croix. Upon reviewing the documents, it was discovered that the checking account belonging to Roberts had four returned transactions from Home Depot totaling over \$12,900. A warrant was issued for Roberts's arrest on October 12, 2022.

In court on Wednesday, a judge ruled that Roberts would be released pending trial if she's able to post an unsecured bond for the full bail amount of \$20,000. She is barred from leaving St. Croix without the court's written permission, and Roberts must report to the Office of Probation every Tuesday. Her pre-trial conference is scheduled for January 23, 2023.