

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Couple Arrested on Gun Possession Charges

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Mugshots of Deseree Rodriguez and Renaldo Santos. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A couple appeared before a V.I. Superior Court judge on Dec. 31 to face charges after police executed search warrants on their residence.

Renaldo Santos and Deseree Rodriguez were both arrested and charged on December 29 with carrying a firearm openly or concealed and possession or sale of ammunition.

Their arrest follows a follow-up investigation into Santos, a person of interest to law enforcement.

According to documents before the courts, on December 29 officers from the Criminal Investigations Bureau were present at East Street Christiansted where they made contact with Santos who was partially clothed. Santos was advised of the investigation, clothes were retrieved for him and he was subsequently transported to the Wilbur H Francis Command Police Station.

Contact was also made with Santos's fiancée, Desiree Rodriguez, who was at the residence when police arrived. She was briefed by police on the reason why they were at the residence, and Rodriguez gave the officers written consent to search her vehicle but not consent to search her residence. Search warrants were subsequently issued by a Superior Court judge for the residence and a blue Nissan Altima registered to Santos.

Members of the Criminal Investigations Bureau executed the warrants and a black Smith and Wesson .40 caliber firearm was found inside a beige container with dry dog food. The container was found in the kitchen next to the dining room table. The firearm was in a brown holster, wrapped inside a black plastic bag. There was one magazine inside the magazine weld with 9 live rounds inside.

Rodriguez was asked who owned the firearm, however she denied ownership of it. She stated that she did not have a license to carry or possess a firearm in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and was transported to a police station where she was read her Miranda rights. Rodriguez declined to provide a statement to police.

Santos was also asked who owned the firearm which was found at the residence and he too denied ownership of it, telling police he does not reside at the residence. Santos further stated that he too did not have a license to carry or possess a firearm and declined to give police a statement.

A firearms check confirmed that the two did not have licenses to carry firearms.

In court on Friday, December 30, a judge ruled that Rodriguez would be released upon the posting of \$500 cash, with the remainder of the \$50,000 bail to be posted as an unsecured bond.

Santos was ordered to post \$2,500 cash with the remainder of his \$50,000 bail to be posted as a unsecured bond. Santos, however would need to provide the court with a suitable third-party custodian before he can be released.

Both Rodriguez and Santos were barred from leaving St. Croix without the court's written permission. They were also ordered to surrender their passports and must report to the Office of Probation every Tuesday.

They must have no unlawful contact with any victim or witness and must not discuss the matter with each other. Santos will be placed on 24-hour arrest with an electronic monitor and will only be allowed to leave the residence for medical emergencies, to meet with his attorney and to appear in court.