

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Snapchat Clue Leads to Arrest in St. Croix Department of Health Burglary Case

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Alejandro Torres III By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A serial offender is back before the criminal courts, this time for allegedly stealing from the V.I. Department of Health.

On February 27, police were called to investigate a burglary at DOH and were informed that about \$1,500 worth of items were stolen, including laptops, cell phones, and a television, after several offices had been opened and rummaged. The employee who discovered the intrusion reportedly believes that the perpetrator entered through the south facing emergency door. While that door was already cracked, the crack had gotten

worse, police were told.

The following day, February 28, one of the employees reported that they had received a friend request on the media-sharing app Snapchat, from someone called "A. Torres". The number associated with the account matched that of one of the cell phones that had been stolen. On Monday April 3, a man brought one of the laptops that had been reported stolen back to DOH, saying that he had gone on a walk in the old Elena Christian Junior High School a few days prior to look for pallets, and found the laptop near the computer lab. After charging the device, the man says he noticed that it belonged to the Department of Health from its screen name.

After the laptop's return, police tracked down the man and informed him that his statements were inconsistent. The man was also told of the Snapchat request from A. Torres, and asked him whether he knew anyone with such a name. The man said that he had a nephew, Alejandro Torres III, who had recently been released from prison and now resided with him.

In the presence of law enforcement and a senior DOH official, the man said that while waiting for a bus near the old Elena Christian Junior High School, he saw his nephew, Alejandro Torres, walking from the school with the laptop in tow. Torres reportedly told his uncle that the laptop belonged to him. The man told police that a few days later his nephew tried to assault him and he asked Torres to leave the residence. He said that while cleaning the room where Torres was staying, he found the laptop under a pillow. That was when he charged it and noticed that it belonged to DOH. He also told police that he had seen Torres with a cellphone and that the young man had given him a number on which he could be contacted.

According to police, the number stored in the man's phone as Torres was the same one that was assigned to the missing DOH cell phone. On April 12, Torres was apprehended in Golden Rock, near the department's offices. After complaining of chest pain, Torres was transported to the Juan F. Luis Hospital where he was evaluated, treated and discharged. He was arrested and charged with grand larceny, possession of stolen property and third-degree burglary.

Apart from his most recent prison stint on a string of charges including trespass, domestic violence assault and disturbance of the peace, the repeat offender has a lengthy criminal history dating back to 2008 according to public records maintained by the Superior Court.

An advice of rights hearing for Alejandro Torres III's most recent arrest was scheduled for Friday April 14, 2023, however there were no updates on the court's decision regarding bail.