

# Massachusetts State Police, federal, and local agencies, capture double-murder suspect in Hyannis

“A joint operation by state, federal, and local law enforcement agencies led to the capture on Cape Cod of a fugitive wanted for a double homicide last month in Illinois.

CARL CURRY, 33, was arrested around 9:30 a.m. today after he came out of a house at 418 Pitchers Way in Hyannis.

Troopers assigned to the Massachusetts State Police Violent Fugitive Apprehension Section, US Marshals from the Boston Office, members of a US Marshals task force, and Barnstable Police Officers converged on that address this morning after the US Marshals Great Lakes Regional Federal Task Force developed information that indicated CURRY was likely hiding out there with relatives.

Once at the residence, the team made contact with the homeowner, who denied them entry to the house. Troopers, Marshals and Officers set up a perimeter outside the home and maintained contact with the homeowner. After about an hour, CURRY emerged from the home and was taken into custody.

CURRY is wanted on a warrant out of Riverside, Illinois for two counts of murder stemming from the Nov. 13, 2021 shooting deaths of a 31-year-old woman and a 38-year-old man inside a residence in Riverside, Illinois. The ensuing investigation by Riverside Police identified CURRY as the shooter and the murder warrant issued on Nov. 19.

The USMS Great Lakes Regional Federal Task Force began assisting in tracking CURRY, leading to information that he

was likely in Hyannis. The US Marshals Boston Office and MSP VFAS then began assisting on the case.

Following his arrest, CURRY was transported to the Barnstable Police Station, where he was booked as a fugitive from justice. In addition to the murders, CURRY faces a charge of violating his parole from a prior conviction.

Prosecutors will work to have CURRY rendited to Illinois to face the murder and parole violation charges.”-Massachusetts State Police.

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## **Massachusetts man sentenced for COVID-Relief Fraud and Identity Theft**

A Malden man was sentenced today in connection with submitting fraudulent applications for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). The federal PUA program provides unemployment-related benefits to individuals who have been impacted by COVID-19.

Wagner Sozi, 33, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge George A. O'Toole Jr. to 39 months in prison and two years of supervised release. Sozi was also ordered to pay forfeiture and restitution in the approximate amount of \$110,000. On May 13, 2021, Sozi pleaded guilty to two counts of wire fraud, one count of aggravated identity theft and one count of making a false claim.

Sozi engaged in a scheme to use stolen identity information to open accounts, make purchases, rent cars and apply for PUA benefits. Sozi obtained this stolen identity information from

various sources, including from a Cambridge realty company that collected the personal identifying information of people who sought to rent local apartments. Sozi lived with an individual who worked for the realty company, and various files belonging to the company were found in the apartment. Numerous identity theft victims tied to Sozi had been clients of the realty company, including at least one person in whose name a fraudulent PUA claim was filed.

Sozi, along with a female accomplice, opened store credit accounts at Massachusetts Staples locations under various fake identities and then used these accounts to purchase more than \$80,000 in Visa gift cards. Sozi and his co-conspirator submitted fraudulent Staples' store credit account applications using the personal identifying information of more than 60 victims, which Voltaire processed in exchange for \$8,000 in kickbacks. In addition to the use of stolen identity information to open Staples credit accounts, Sozi used such information to purchase a Rolex for more than \$15,000, withdraw \$5,000 cash and rent a Dodge Charger and a Ford Mustang, both of which he failed to return.

On Oct. 26, 2021, Voltaire pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and is scheduled to be sentenced on Feb. 28, 2022.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Frederick J. Regan, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service, Boston Field Office; and Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations, made the announcement today. Valuable assistance in the investigation was provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Unemployment Assistance, Program Integrity Unit; the Massachusetts State Police; and the Malden, Medford and Braintree Police Departments. Assistant U.S. Attorney William Abely, Chief of Mendell's Criminal Division prosecuted the case.

On May 17, 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the Department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus>.

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

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## **40-year-old Taunton man convicted of the first degree murder of his father-in-law**

A 40-year-old Taunton man was convicted this week of the First Degree Murder of his father-in-law and was sentenced to serve life in prison with no possibility of parole, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Richard Carreiro-Forbes was convicted by a jury of his peers after a three-week long trial in Fall River Superior Court. The defendant had been convicted of the same charge in May 2015, but was granted a new trial due to a technicality regarding the contents of a plea agreement with a cooperating witness.

The defendant and his wife lived next door to the victim in a duplex. The victim deeded the home over to his daughter and gave himself a life estate. The home, which was in poor condition, had to be renovated in order for the defendant to get an insurance policy for it. The defendant and his wife spent approximately \$50,000 to fix up their half of the home, but the victim would not allow anyone inside his home to do any improvements. The defendant and his wife lost the insurance on the home due to the victim's side of the home being in such bad condition. After failed attempts to have the victim evicted, the defendant started to come up with a plan to kill the victim and recruited a friend to establish an alibi.

On the evening of August 17, 2010, the defendant shot the victim multiple times in the home and then stabbed him four times in the neck until he was dead.

The case was prosecuted by Co-First Assistant District Attorney Karen O'Sullivan and Assistant District Attorney Jeanne Veenstra. The state prison sentence was imposed by Judge Gregg Pasquale.

"This was a brutal and premeditated murder committed by the defendant against his father-in-law, motivated solely for personal gain. I want to thank the prosecutors and investigators for obtaining a conviction in this case for the second time. I'm also grateful to the family for their perseverance through a difficult ordeal. I appreciate the jury coming to the correct verdict and for their patience throughout the trial," District Attorney Quinn said.

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# Rollins Backs Tougher Penalties in Abuse of Power Cases

By Chris Lisinski  
State House News Service

Warning that existing law leaves a dangerous “loophole” in place, Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins pushed Tuesday for the Legislature to create a new criminal charge for adults who exploit positions of authority to engage in sexual acts with minors.

Teachers, coaches, babysitters, mentors and other adults who misuse their standing to participate in sexual activity with a child under their watch would face substantial prison time if lawmakers advance a bill (H 1801 / S 1092) that Rollins endorsed.

Under current law, Rollins said, anyone in Massachusetts above the age of consent of 16 years old can legally engage in consensual sexual touching with minors who are at least 14 years old and can have intercourse with minors 16 years old and above.

“This becomes problematic when the person over 16 is an adult and in a position of authority or trust,” Rollins told the Judiciary Committee.

Last year, the Suffolk County DA’s office convened a leadership council of adults who survived sexual abuse and assault as children. Council members heard story after story, Rollins recalled, of children who were victimized by someone

“in a position of trust,” including a baseball coach, two priests, a director of a youth musical organization and others.

Several of the cases could not be prosecuted at all because the children were technically old enough to consent despite the disproportionate power structure in the relationship, Rollins said.

Rollins’s testimony came one day after her office announced that a former Boston Public Schools middle school teacher pleaded guilty to child sex abuse charges involving a former student.

David Lockwood, 54, on Monday was sentenced to four years in prison followed by two years of probation after pleading guilty to four counts of rape against a child. Starting in 1996, the DA’s office said, Lockwood began abusing a 12-year-old student of his at the Timilty Middle School in Roxbury, using his position “to gain her trust and prime her for abuse.”

As Rollins noted at Tuesday’s hearing, prosecutors could only charge Lockwood for a portion of his crimes. He continued the abuse past the survivor’s 16th birthday, Rollins’s office said, but because the survivor had reached the age of consent, the DA said she no longer had the same legal protection.

“It is unbelievable that we are talking about this, but I am so grateful you are considering closing this loophole,” Rollins told lawmakers on Tuesday. “There are real lives impacted.”

The bill, filed by Sen. Joan Lovely, would allow for a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison for a person in a position of trust, authority or supervision who commits an assault and battery on a child between the ages of 14 and 18.

An adult who commits a similar offense on a child younger than

14 “shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for life or for any term of years, but not less than 10 years,” under the bill. Adult caretakers who have intercourse with minors, for whom the age of consent is 16, would face “imprisonment in the state prison for life or for any terms of years.”

The legislation also stresses that anyone under the age of 18 is incapable of consenting to a sexual interaction with an adult in a position of authority in such cases.

“Teachers, coaches, tutors, mentors – anyone who has any type of authority over a child should strive to protect them, not to exploit them,” Lovely, a Salem Democrat, said. “This bill would help close that loophole.”

Lovely filed half a dozen bills before the Judiciary Committee at Tuesday’s hearing, including another bill (S 1091) that would require schools to implement new standardized screening mechanisms to examine if any new hires have been previously disciplined for abuse or sexual misconduct.

“It is beyond comprehension that we do not have this in place,” Suzanne Messina, a board member at the Massachusetts Citizens for Children group, or MassKids, told the committee. “Those people most entrusted with our children should be screened. Just as parents screen a babysitter, just as parents screen a nanny, those parents have the right to expect our schools to do the same for those people to whom we entrust our children.”

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# Former Enforcer for Massachusetts Latin Kings sentenced for racketeering conspiracy

A former member of the New Bedford Chapter of the Massachusetts Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation ("Latin Kings") was sentenced today on racketeering charges.

Michael Marrero, a/k/a "King Clumsy," 41, was sentenced by U.S. Senior District Court Judge Rya W. Zobel to three years in prison and three years of supervised release. On March 30, 2021, Marrero pleaded guilty to conspiracy to conduct enterprise affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity, more commonly referred to as RICO conspiracy.

The Latin Kings are a violent criminal enterprise comprised of thousands of members across the United States. The Latin Kings adhere to a national manifesto, employ an internal judiciary and use a sophisticated system of communication to maintain the hierarchy of the organization. As alleged in court documents, the gang uses drug distribution to generate revenue, and engages in violence against witnesses and rival gangs to further its influence and to protect its turf.

According to court documents, Marrero served as the Inca, or leader, of the Springfield Chapter of the Latin Kings until 2019, when he was appointed as Enforcer for the State of Massachusetts. In these leadership roles, Marrero attended meetings of the gang and state leadership where the business of the gang was discussed and decisions concerning members and operation of the gang were decided. In August 2019, Marrero was captured on a recording in the basement of a Latin Kings controlled trap house in New Bedford bagging and preparing 62

grams of cocaine base for distribution.

In December 2019, a federal grand jury returned an indictment alleging racketeering conspiracy, drug conspiracy and firearms charges against 62 leaders, members and associates of the Latin Kings. Marrero is the 40th defendant to be sentenced in the case.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division; Commissioner Carol Mici of the Massachusetts Department of Correction; and New Bedford Police Chief Joseph C. Cordeiro made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was also provided by the FBI North Shore Gang Task Force and the Bristol County and Suffolk County District Attorney's Offices. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Philip A. Mallard of Mendell's Organized Crime Gang Unit prosecuted the case.

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The remaining defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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# **Massachusetts State Police, Marshals arrest suspect wanted for shooting at casino**

A multi-agency investigative team this morning developed information on the location of a suspect wanted for a shooting incident in the parking garage at Encore Casino on Dec. 1. Troopers, Officers, and members of a US Marshals Task Force immediately responded to that location, an apartment in Salem, and apprehended suspect STEVEN GONZALEZ, 33.

On the night of Dec. 1, members of the Massachusetts State Police Gaming Enforcement Unit and Everett Police Officers responded to a report of shots fired in the garage at the Everett casino. Upon arrival, Troopers and Officers located ballistics evidence. The subsequent investigation identified the shooter as GONZALEZ and determined that he fired multiple rounds at a group of men following an altercation.

Investigators also learned that GONZALEZ, whose last known address at that time was in Peabody, fled the area on foot after the shooting and was later picked up by someone in a motor vehicle. Investigators did not locate any victims from the incident, leading them to believe no one was struck by gunfire. A warrant was obtained from Malden District Court charging GONZALEZ with armed assault with intent to murder, discharging a firearm within 500 feet of a building, carrying a firearm without a license, and unlawful possession of ammunition.

Investigators were unable to locate GONZALEZ in the immediate aftermath of the shooting and requested assistance from the Massachusetts State Police Violent Fugitive Apprehension Section (MSP VFAS). Earlier today MSP VFAS Troopers, Gaming Enforcement Unit Troopers, members of a US Marshals Task

Force, and Everett and Salem Officers went to the Salem apartment where intelligence suggested GONZALEZ was staying, located and arrested him without incident, and transported him to the Salem Police Department for booking.

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## **New Bedford Police charge 40-year old man with possession to distribute narcotics**

"On December 1, 2021, a search warrant was executed for Shawn Audette, 40, and for his residence at 274 Phillips Avenue #1.

As a result of the search, New Bedford Police Detectives located a bag of fentanyl, a non-labeled prescription bottle containing 100 tablets of 800 mg gabapentin, \$125 in U.S. currency, several cut corner bags, packing materials, cutting agents, and gloves.

Audette also had an active warrant out of 3rd District Court for being in possession with intent to distribute a class B substance.

He was arrested and charged with two counts of possession to distribute a class A drug and one count of possession to distribute a class C drug."-New Bedford Police.

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# Arraignment date scheduled in New Bedford cold case homicide from 2001

*This is an update of a previous article.*

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The Fall River Superior Court Clerk's Office has scheduled the arraignment of David Reed for Friday, December 10th at 9 am.

The defendant will be arraigned on an indictment charging him with Murder and Armed Robbery in connection to the previously unsolved March 2001 killing of Rose Marie Moniz in New Bedford.

The defendant, who is in custody, has already been arraigned in connection to the 2003 assault and robbery of Maribel Martinez-Alegria in New Bedford. He was arraigned in October on indictments charging him with Armed Assault with Intent to Murder and Armed Robbery.

Judge Gregg Pasquale found him dangerous after a Superior Court Dangerousness Hearing was held in early November, meaning the defendant is held without bail.

This Friday's Murder arraignment will be handled by Deputy District Attorney William McCauley and Assistant District Attorney Caleb Weiner.

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# Massachusetts man pleads guilty to possession of child pornography

An Upton man pleaded guilty yesterday in federal court in Worcester to possessing child pornography.

Matthew Stefanelli, 32, pleaded guilty to one count of possession of child pornography before U.S. District Court Judge Timothy S. Hillman who scheduled sentencing for March 18, 2022. Stefanelli was arrested and charged on July 14, 2021.

In December 2020, a CyberTip report identified Stefanelli as the owner of an account used to store child pornography. On Jan. 6, 2021, a search of Stefanelli's residence resulted in the seizure of several electronic devices including Stefanelli's cell phone. A forensic review of the phone revealed approximately 33 image files depicting child pornography, including the child identified in the CyberTip report. Stefanelli stored these images in an encrypted application designed to appear as a calculator.

The charge of possession of child pornography provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, at least five years and up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based on the United States Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Matthew B. Millhollin, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston; and Upton Police Chief Michael J. Bradley Jr. made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristen Noto of Mendell's Worcester Branch Office is prosecuting the case.

Members of the public who have questions, concerns or information regarding this case should call 617-748-3274.

The case is brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In 2006, the Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from exploitation and abuse. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the DOJ's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov/](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov/).

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## **Puerto Rican man living in Massachusetts pleads guilty in wide-ranging Fentanyl, Heroin, Cocaine conspiracy**

A Puerto Rican man pleaded guilty today in federal court in Worcester to his role in a wide-ranging fentanyl, heroin, crack and cocaine trafficking conspiracy.

Rafael Hidalgo Rodriguez, 33, of Ponce, P.R., pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute and to possess with intent to distribute 280 grams or more of cocaine base and 500 grams or more of cocaine. U.S. District Court Judge Timothy S. Hillman scheduled sentencing for March 21, 2022. Rodriguez was charged in an eight-count superseding indictment along with 17 others in July 2020.

According to court documents, following a fatal fentanyl overdose in September 2018, law enforcement began an investigation into a drug trafficking organization (DTO) in the Fitchburg area led by co-conspirators Pedro Baez and Anthony Baez. Through court-authorized interceptions of phones used by the DTO and its suppliers, agents were able to identify the individuals who supplied Pedro and Anthony Baez with cocaine, heroin and fentanyl.

Over the course of the investigation, agents seized over 1.8 kilograms of a heroin and fentanyl mixture, over 3.6 kilograms of cocaine and over 50 grams of crack cocaine, as well as a stolen, loaded handgun, drug manufacturing equipment and over \$376,000. Rodriguez distributed between three and five kilograms of cocaine.

Rodriguez is the ninth defendant to plead guilty in this case. In December 2020, Anthony Baez was sentenced by Judge Hillman to 13 years in prison and five years of supervised release. Pedro Baez pleaded guilty on Feb. 2, 2021 and is scheduled to be sentenced on May 17, 2022.

The charge of conspiracy to distribute 280 grams or more of cocaine base and 500 grams or more of cocaine provides for a sentence of up to life in prison, at least four years and up to a lifetime of supervised release and a fine of up to \$10 million. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; Commissioner Carol Mici of the Massachusetts Department of Correction; and Colonel Christopher Mason, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Fitchburg and Lunenburg Police Departments; the U.S. Postal Inspection Service; and the Massachusetts

State Police. Assistant U.S. Attorney Alatheia Porter of Mendell's Narcotics and Money Laundering Unit is prosecuting the case.

The operation was conducted is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) Strike Force Initiative, which provides for the establishment of permanent multi-agency task force teams that work side-by-side in the same location. This co-located model enables agents from different agencies to collaborate on intelligence-driven, multi-jurisdictional operations to disrupt and dismantle the most significant drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations. More information on the OCDETF program is available here: <https://www.justice.gov/ocdetf/about-ocdetf>.

The details contained in the court documents are allegations. The remaining defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.