A man impersonating an FBI agent tried to get Luigi Mangione out of jail, authorities say



Luigi Mangione appears in Manhattan Criminal Court for an evidence hearing, Dec. 18, 2025, in New York.

PHOTO BY SHANNON STAPLETON/POOL PHOTO/ AP, FILE

NEW YORK (AP) — A man claiming to be an FBI agent showed up to a federal jail in New York City on Wednesday night and told officers he had a court order to release Luigi Mangione, authorities said. He's now locked up there too.

Mark Anderson, a 36-year-old Minnesota native who has a history of drug and other arrests and disclosed last year in court papers that he suffers from mental illness, was arrested and charged with impersonating a federal officer in a foiled bid to free Mangione from the Metropolitan Detention Center. Mangione is being held at the notorious Brooklyn jail while awaiting state and federal murder trials in the killing of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson.

A criminal complaint against Anderson did not identify the person he attempted to free. A law enforcement official familiar with the matter confirmed it was Mangione. The official was not authorized to speak publicly and did so on condition of anonymity.

Anderson was ordered held without bail after an initial appearance Thursday in Brooklyn federal court. He was not required to enter a plea. A day after getting stopped at the entrance, he is now jailed at the Metropolitan Detention Center, according to federal prison records.

A message seeking comment was left for Anderson's court-appointed lawyer. A message was also left for a spokesperson for Mangione's legal team.

In a lawsuit last year alleging injuries from a fall at a city homeless shelter, Anderson said he has "multiple disabilities" and has been ruled by the Social Security Administration to be "fully disabled because of mental illness." He said he had no money and said he received state and federal assistance.

According to public records, Anderson has had numerous drug and alcohol-related arrests and convictions over the past two decades in his native Minnesota and in Wisconsin, where he has also lived. He also has cases pending in the Bronx, including one in which he's accused of showing a gun.

Man had papers 'signed by a judge' and a pizza cutter, authorities say

According to the criminal complaint, Anderson approached the jail intake area around 6:50 p.m. Wednesday and told uniformed jail officers that he was an FBI agent in possession of paperwork "signed by a judge" authorizing the release of a specific person in custody at the jail.

When the officers asked for his federal credentials, Anderson showed them a Minnesota driver's license, threw documents at them and claimed to have weapons, the criminal complaint said. The documents appeared related to filing claims against the Justice Department, according to an FBI agent who viewed them and prepared the complaint. Officers searched Anderson's bag and found a barbecue fork and a circular steel blade, the complaint said. In a photo included in the complaint, the blade appeared to be a small pizza cutter wheel.

Anderson's driver's license listed an address in Mankato, Minnesota, about 65 miles (110 kilometers) southwest of Minneapolis. He moved to New York for a job opportunity and started working at a Bronx pizzeria when that fell through, the law enforcement official said. Court records indicate he had been living in the city at least since 2023, including at motels, a shelter and a Bronx apartment.

Acting as his own lawyer, he has filed handwritten lawsuits against the Pentagon, Chinese and Russian ambassadors and a Minnesota police department, all of which have been thrown out. Another lawsuit, alleging a Bronx pizzeria forced him to work 70 hours a week with no overtime, is still pending.

Mangione due in court Friday as death penalty ruling looms

The alleged attempt to free Mangione added a bizarre wrinkle to a critical stretch in his legal cases.

Hours before Anderson's arrest, the Manhattan district attorney's office sent a letter urging the judge in Mangione's state case, Gregory Carro, to set a July 1 trial date.

On Friday, Mangione will be in court for a conference in his federal case. The judge in that case, Margaret Garnett, is expected to rule soon whether prosecutors can seek the death penalty and whether they can use certain evidence against him.

Last week, Garnett scheduled jury selection in the federal case for Sept. 8, with the rest of the trial happening in October or January, depending on whether she allows prosecutors to seek the death penalty.

Mangione has pleaded not guilty in both cases. The state charges carry the possibility of life in prison.

A cause célèbre for people upset with the health insurance industry, Mangione has attracted legions of supporters, some of whom have regularly turned up at his court appearances donning green clothing — the color worn by the Mario Bros. video game character Luigi — as a symbol of solidarity. Some have brought signs and shirts with slogans such as "Free Luigi" and "No Death For Luigi Mangione."

Thompson, 50, was killed on Dec. 4, 2024, as he walked to a midtown Manhattan hotel for UnitedHealth Group's annual investor conference. Surveillance video showed a masked gunman shooting him from behind. Police say "delay," "deny" and "depose" were written on the ammunition, mimicking a phrase used to describe how insurers avoid paying claims.

Mangione, a 27-year-old Ivy League graduate from a wealthy Maryland family, was arrested five days later at a McDonald's in Altoona, Pennsylvania, about 230 miles (about 370 kilometers) west of Manhattan.

After several days of court proceedings in Pennsylvania, Mangione was whisked to New York and sent to the Metropolitan Detention Center.

The jail is also home to former Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores. Former inmates include hip-hop mogul Sean "Diddy" Combs and cryptocurrency fraudster Sam Bankman-Fried.

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