

# U.S. MARSHALS

# MOST WANTED



## NEWS RELEASE

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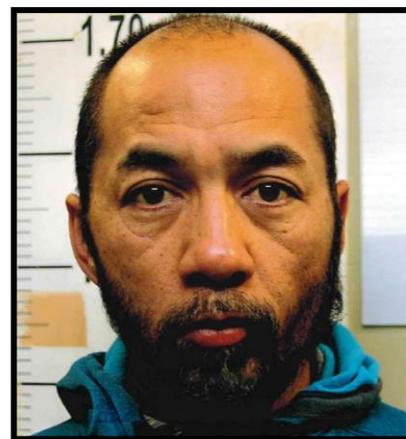
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## ILLINOIS MURDER SUSPECT ADDED TO US MARSHALS *15 MOST WANTED* FUGITIVE LIST

Reward of up to **\$25,000** offered for information directly leading to his arrest

**WASHINGTON** – The manhunt for an Illinois fugitive intensified today as the U.S. Marshals named him one of the nation’s *15 Most Wanted*.

John Panaligan, 54, is wanted for allegedly murdering attorney Victor Jigar Patel, who was found strangled to death in his Northbrook, Illinois, office on Dec. 7, 2016. At the time of his death, Patel, 36, was representing plaintiffs suing Panaligan in civil court. Panaligan allegedly lured the victim to his law office by scheduling an appointment using an alias. Authorities believe Panaligan showed up wearing a disguise, which was captured on nearby security cameras, and then killed the victim in his office. Two days later,



Panaligan was detained at the Canadian border for allegedly smuggling a firearm into Canada. He was eventually allowed to return to the U.S. where he was interviewed by Northbrook Police in relation to Patel’s death. During the investigation, authorities executed multiple search warrants of Panaligan’s belongings and property. Evidence collected eventually gave authorities reason to believe Panaligan was the prime suspect in Patel’s murder. However, Panaligan fled to Mexico before he could be arrested. On Feb. 8, 2017, an arrest warrant was issued for Panaligan for first-degree murder.

“This senseless crime took the life of a man who was a husband and a father to two small children,” said U.S. Marshals Service Director Donald Washington. “The U.S. Marshals and our federal, state, and local law enforcement partners will use every available resource to bring John Panaligan to face justice for the heinous allegations involving the murder of Victor Jigar Patel.”

Officials from the Northbrook Police Department agreed and added, “The Northbrook Police are relentless in the pursuit of justice and in the search for John Panaligan, who must answer for this crime that widowed a spouse, and deprived two young children of their father.”

Due to Panaligan's international ties and dual citizenship between the U.S. and the Republic of the Philippines, authorities believe he could be anywhere, and may be receiving assistance from family and friends to elude capture.

"We are absolutely resolute in our commitment to bringing Panaligan to justice" said Diego Grimaldo, commander of the U.S. Marshals Great Lakes Regional Fugitive Task Force, which adopted the fugitive investigation from the Northbrook Police Department on Feb. 8, 2017. "With our law enforcement partners, both here and abroad, we will leave no stone unturned until he is behind bars."

Panaligan is a 5-foot-5 male of Asian descent weighing approximately 150 pounds with black hair and brown eyes.

The U.S. Marshals are offering a reward of up to **\$25,000** for information leading directly to his arrest. Anyone with information should notify the agency at the nearest U.S. Marshals office, the Communications Center at 1-877-WANTED-2, online via the web, or an app at [www.usmarshals.gov/tips](http://www.usmarshals.gov/tips).

Additional information about the U.S. Marshals Service can be found at [www.usmarshals.gov](http://www.usmarshals.gov).