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SFPD Arrests Three Pickpocket Suspects Targeting Chinatown Victims #26-057

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Arrests Made as a Result of Diligent Police Work and Strong Community-Police Relations

San Francisco Police officers arrested three suspects connected to a series of pickpocket crimes targeting Chinatown victims, SFPD Chief Derrick Lew announced Monday.

Since early April, SFPD has received reports from Chinatown merchants and the community regarding multiple pickpocket and theft incidents across the neighborhood, including one victim who lost approximately \$4,000 in property.

[View additional video on our Vimeo account.](#)

With the help of strong relationships with Chinatown merchants and the community, Central Station officers assigned to the Chinatown foot beat identified three individuals believed to be responsible for multiple reported and unreported pickpocket thefts.

*“Criminals targeting Chinatown, or any other community in San Francisco, is simply unacceptable,” said **Police Chief Derrick Lew**. “I want to thank members of the Central Station for their continued partnership with the merchants to demonstrate the highest level of community policing that keeps our city and Chinatown safe. Thank you to all the officers involved, including our citywide plainclothes and our Real Time Investigation Center, for the work that led to these great arrests.”*

*“I am proud of our officers and community for working together to keep Chinatown safe,” said **Central Station Captain Christopher Del Gandio**. “The result of our continued partnership demonstrates the importance of reporting all crime and working with police officers.”*

After a weeks-long investigation, SFPD citywide plainclothes officers, with support from the Real Time Investigation Center, identified a suspect vehicle and three individuals believed to be tied to the thefts.

On May 16, 2026, investigators tracked the suspect vehicle entering San Francisco using Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR) and a drone unit. The suspects parked a vehicle near Chinatown and began casing patrons throughout the neighborhood. Citywide plainclothes officers observed the group working together to steal property from victims while acting as lookouts for one another. The officers ultimately arrested all three suspects:

- Stefan Ruset, 35-year-old male of Vallejo, California
- Marian Constantine, 30-year-old male of Vallejo, California
- Florin Matei of Vallejo, 26-year-old of Vallejo, California

All three suspects were booked in the San Francisco County Jail for the following charges:

- Grand Theft 487(c) PC / Felony
- Conspiracy 182(a)(1) PC / Felony
- Possession of Stolen Property 496(a) PC / Misdemeanor

During the operation, officers also recovered the stolen property and returned it to the victims.

On May 17, 2026, officers executed a search warrant at the suspects’ residence in Vallejo, resulting in the recovery of stolen property and more than \$14,000 of U.S.

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