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TLP:CLEAR

[FB-ISAO Current Threat Level](#)

FB-ISAO Physical Threat Level:

Elevated

FB-ISAO has assessed the general Physical Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations as "**ELEVATED**." As per FB-ISAO's definitions of the Physical Threat Levels, "**ELEVATED**" means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events, but there is a concern that an event is more likely than normal.

FB-ISAO Cyber Threat Level:

Elevated

FB-ISAO has assessed the general Cyber Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations as "**ELEVATED**." As per FB-ISAO's definitions of the Cyber Threat Levels, "**ELEVATED**" means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events, but there is a concern that an event is more likely than normal.

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FB-ISAO Newsletter

Bystanders And Reporting

While hostile events or violent activity understandably gain much of the attention, Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) face a number of threats and risks including property crimes, threats, hoaxes, and harassment. Additionally, it is not uncommon for protests and demonstrations to incorporate or utilize space provided by, or near an FBO. FBOs are comprised of organizations of different sizes and as such, can have large, fully funded security teams, or rely on a small staff or even volunteers to fulfill security functions. Regardless of size, another potential line of defense can be the regular congregation member, the visitor, or the bystander.



Bystanders are individuals whose relationships and levels of interaction with a person enable them to become aware of activities or behaviors that could indicate that an individual is on a path to violence. In 2022, the FBI and the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) published a Joint pamphlet titled [Understanding Bystander Interventions to](#)

[Prevent Terrorism](#). The pamphlet called out several important statistics related to identifying concerning behaviors.

Bystanders can be represented in one of four distinct groups:

- **Family Members.** These include parents, stepparents, spouses, siblings, cousins, and children. This group is more likely to observe behaviors including personality changes, increases in the amount of time spent online, conflict in the home, and changes in manner of dress or hygiene.
- **Peers.** These groups include coworkers, students, close friends, and significant others, and are more likely to observe behaviors associated with mobilization to violence, including attempts to recruit others, pursuing attack capabilities, and seeking sympathy for an attack.
- **Community Authority Figures, such as religious leaders,** teachers, and work supervisors, are more likely to observe spontaneous displays of concerning behavior, including sporadic verbal support for violent extremism. They may also serve as interlocutors between family and law enforcement.
- **Strangers.** Although strangers are the smallest of any bystander group, they were the most likely to report concerning behaviors to law enforcement.

Bystanders can attempt to help in a variety of ways. This could include helping a suspicious person leave the situation, they can confront a behavior, help defuse a situation or call for other support/security. Bystanders should never put themselves in harm's way and should assess each situation independently as no two situations are the same.

FB-ISAO Advisory Board

Get to Know the Board of Advisors

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Not Yet a Member of FB-ISAO?

How to join...

Not Yet on FB-ISAO Slack? You Need to Be!

Write to membership

Visit the [events page](#) for a complete listing of FB-ISAO events.



Lone Defenders Have a Forum

For various reasons, many houses of worship are devoid of a formal safety or security team. Though that is a difficult reality, there are things that can be done to help mitigate.

- 💡 Know that you are not alone. In fact, many FB-ISAO member organizations are in a similar situation.
- 💡 Consider reaching out to others on FB-ISAO Slack and forming a group where you can exchange ideas and best practices (we are happy to help!)
- 💡 A bottom-up approach could be valuable in this situation though know you're alone in the fight. Finding and cultivating allies will help you build your program from within.
- 💡 Invest in yourself! Right now, you are your house of worship's best asset.
- 💡 Be mindful of burn-out. Know the signs! Though loneliness can set in, you're not likely to be alone for too long.

In April, the FB-ISAO formed a community of interest for lone defenders. The community of interest is hosted on FB-ISAO Slack. If you are not a member of FB-ISAO, visit our [membership page](#) for more information. Our lone defender community of interest will band people together to share ideas, concerns and to work together to develop some guidance and best practices. [Let's work together, to Protect and Secure the Free Practice of Faith](#) whether a house of worship serves 10,000+ 1000+ or 100+.



Spotlight: Spring / Summer Weather

As severe storms continue to impact wide parts of the country, and as tornado season moves into peak season, it is important to continue to assess the impacts that severe weather can have to organizations as well as to their supply chain and what the downstream impacts could be. Severe weather can be in the form of storm surge, flooding, wind, tornadoes. Colorado State University released its [2025 Forecast for Hurricane Activity](#).

- By evaluating the impacts of these all-hazard threats, specifically weather and natural disasters, organizations can work toward achieving a higher state of preparedness and flexibility to respond should an incident occur.
- Organizations are encouraged to consider not just their primary location, but also their supply chain and critical dependencies.

DHS/FEMA sponsors a program called "[Ready Business](#)" which assists businesses in developing a preparedness program.