

CBHA Leadership Responds to the Hostage Incident at Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas Over the Weekend

Dear Colleagues,

Over the weekend, a 10-hour stand-off took place at Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas, ending with four hostages escaping unharmed and a suspect dead. The incident occurred at the synagogue Saturday morning during Shabbat services.



For over 10 hours, the country watched as the FBI and local law enforcement worked to get the hostages out safely. For many, both in and outside the Jewish community, the event invoked anxiety and memories of trauma. In particular, many recall the shooting that took place on October 27th, 2018, at the Tree of Life Congregation in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The congregation, along with New Light Congregation and Congregation Dor Hadash, was also attacked during Shabbat morning services. The suspect killed eleven people and wounded six, including several Holocaust survivors. It was the deadliest attack on the Jewish community in United States history. These events have long-lasting consequences and are not only traumatic for the victims and their families but the community and nation as a whole.

The assailant, Malik Faisal Akram, a 44-year-old British citizen, arrived in the United States at Kennedy Airport in New York on a tourist visa about two weeks ago.

In the aftermath of a traumatic, violent, and highly publicized incident, there is often speculation about a person's mental state during or before an attack. As information continues to be released and the public reacts, it's important to remember that most people with mental illness do not engage in acts of violence. CBHA has linked an article published by the American Psychology Association (APA), "**Mental illness and violence: Debunking myths, addressing realities,**" which discusses misconceptions surrounding mental illness and violent behavior.

Regardless of the attacker's motives or mental state, CBHA stands with our Jewish brothers and sisters as we continue to advocate for behavioral health in California.

To quote Vice President Kamala Harris, "Everyone has a right to pray, work, study, and spend time with loved ones not as the other – but as us."

In Service,



Le Ondra Clark Harvey, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer

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