



JTTF PRESS RELEASE

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Juvenile Arrested for Conducting Swatting Attacks Targeting Synagogues and Other Institutions

West Covina – A juvenile suspect who was a member of an online swatting ring was arrested Tuesday morning, it was announced today by members of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force located in the FBI's West Covina Resident Agency and leaders with the Orange County Sheriff's Department; the Tustin Police Department; the Fullerton Police Department; and the Orange County District Attorney's Office.

A series of hoax swatting threats had been made over the summer targeting numerous religious, educational, and public institutions in the United States, to include Jewish synagogues and African American churches. The group suspected of perpetrating the hoaxes was known to have called in bomb threats and swatting attempts at Jewish facilities, including at least 25 synagogues in 13 states between July 2023 and August 2023.

Swatting is a term used to describe criminal activity by an individual (or group) who knowingly provides false information to police suggesting that a threat exists at a particular location so that police respond with tactical units, or what's commonly known as a S.W.A.T. Team, (Special Weapons and Tactics).

The Joint Terrorism Task Force, in concert with law enforcement in Southern California and New York, as well as community organizations, compiled information that led to the identity of the individual believed to have created the server that hosted the suspected swatting network. The server that hosted that network, which has since been taken offline, included members who espoused extremist views, to include the glorification of highly publicized mass killers.

The suspect was arrested on Tuesday morning by members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force and will be charged at the state level by the Orange County District Attorney's Office with two of the local swatting hoaxes. The local swatting attempts occurred at synagogues in Tustin and in Fullerton. The suspect's name will not be released because the individual is a minor.

The false swatting threats made in this case drained law enforcement resources and caused a negative financial impact on local communities. Evidence has shown that making false threats can cause significant distress to victims and can cause physical injury to first responders or other victims.



This case was investigated by members of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force located in the FBI's West Covina Resident Agency and partners to include the Orange County Sheriff's Department; the Tustin Police Department; and the Fullerton Police Department. The Anti-Defamation League, the New York City Police Department and the Los Angeles Police Department provided considerable assistance during this investigation, which is ongoing.

