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# NJOHSP

## HIGHEST THREAT TO NEW JERSEY

### Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVEs)

*HVEs will remain New Jersey's most likely and persistent threat over the next year.* In 2015, HVEs demonstrated an ability to operate in New Jersey and throughout the region while connecting with like-minded individuals online and acting independently from organized terrorist groups. Since late 2014, a variety of radical groups such as ISIS and AQAP have encouraged HVEs to attack in their home countries.

- *In 2015, there were five HVE arrests in New Jersey—all ISIS-inspired.* In the same timeframe, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania accounted for 27 percent of all HVE arrests nationwide.
- In December, Tashfeen Malik and Syed Farook, a married couple, killed 14 people and injured 22 in a mass shooting in San Bernardino, California. The wife, Malik, pledged allegiance to ISIS's leader on Facebook. The couple had been radicalized for at least two years, according to the FBI.
- In July, Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeez attacked two military facilities in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He killed five without guidance from a cell or planner. Abdulazeez appears to have been inspired by a variety of extremist propaganda, including from AQAP.
- Two months earlier, Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi opened fire at a "Draw Muhammad" event in Garland, Texas. A week before this attack, a terrorist recruiter invoked the *Charlie Hebdo* attack in Paris in January 2015 and encouraged Simpson by writing, "It's time for brothers in the #US to do their part."
- In February, Ali Shukri Amin was arrested in Virginia for operating a pro-ISIS Twitter account and assisting others traveling to Syria, even though he was not a member of the organization.



*Tashfeen Malik and Syed Farook*

**86% of HVE attacks in the US in 2015 used firearms or edged weapons**

#### Contact Information

Any agency with information or comments/questions on this or other analytical products, please contact the NJOHSP Analysis Bureau at [analysis@njohsp.gov](mailto:analysis@njohsp.gov) or 609-584-4000.