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## Department of Homeland Security warns of potential attacks amid Iran operation

The alert was issued a day before a gunman opened fire in Austin, Texas.

By [Luke Barr](#)

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**Security concerns in the homeland following Iran attack** U.S. officials are examining the possibility that Iran or proxies such as Hezbollah or Hamas have operatives inside the United States. The FBI is stepping up surveillance of suspected individuals.

Luke Barr/ABC News

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The Department of Homeland Security has warned of potential lone-wolf and cyberattacks amid the ongoing strikes in Iran, according to a law enforcement bulletin obtained by ABC News.

"Although a large-scale physical attack is unlikely, Iran and its proxies probably pose a persistent threat of targeted attacks in the Homeland, and will almost certainly escalate retaliatory actions—or calls to action—if reports of the Ayatollah's death are confirmed," according to the bulletin.

"In the short-term, we are most concerned that Iran-aligned hacktivists will conduct low-level cyber attacks against US networks, such as website defacements and distributed denial-of-service attacks," officials said in the bulletin.

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The alert was issued on Saturday, a day before a gunman opened fire in Austin, Texas, and authorities are investigating whether or not the suspect was inspired by the situation overseas.

Law enforcement sources told ABC News the suspect was wearing a sweatshirt with "Property of Allah" on it and underneath, a shirt with "Iran" and the Iranian flag on it.

Officials are also investigating whether the suspect had mental health issues.

The bulletin said physical attacks are rare for those inspired by Iran.



A Department of Homeland Security seal on a podium at Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) headquarters, Mar. 13, 2024.  
Luke Barr/ABC News

"Lone offenders in the Homeland have not historically been motivated by issues related to Iran, the IRGC, or Shia violent extremism; however, the existential threat to the Iranian regime and increased US or Israeli actions could prompt some US-based violent extremists or hate crime perpetrators to attack targets perceived to be Jewish, pro-Israel, or linked to the US government or military," officials said in the bulletin.

Derek Mayer, the former assistant Special Agent in Charge of the Secret Service's Chicago field office, said law enforcement is always on alert for a lone offender.

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"I think law enforcement authorities are concerned about attacks happening every day. And obviously, yesterday with the bombings taking place in Iran, the attacks could come even at a higher rate, but it's your schools, it's your churches, it's at your airports," Mayer, now the chief security officer and vice president of executive protection at P4, said. "The current threat environment in the United States and across the world is, it's very dangerous right now, but it's also to say the last quarter of a century, since the September 11th attacks of 2001, the landscape across the United States and also across the world has been very dangerous."

Police departments across the country have stepped up patrols in high-traffic and high-target areas.

“At times like this, they will be up in patrols and officers, more posts at government facilities, but there is a lot that goes on behind the scenes that the public doesn’t see, whether that be, you know, counter surveillance, whether it be extra intelligence monitoring,” he said.



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