

# Anti-Government and Anti-Authority Violent Extremism (AGAAVE) in the United States

- On August 11, 2022, 42-year-old Ricky Shiffer, armed with an AR-15 rifle and nail gun, attempted to attack an Ohio FBI field office. Police fatally shot him following a six-hour standoff. But his apparent rhetoric aligns with the explosion of anti-government or anti-authority violent extremism.



## The FBI and DHS identify AGAAVE as a top threat

### ➤ WHAT IS IT?

AGAAVE involves the potentially unlawful use or threat of force or violence to further ideological agendas. Derived from anti-government or anti-authority sentiment, these include opposition to perceived economic, social, or racial hierarchies, or perceived government overreach, negligence, or illegitimacy. The FBI has documented an increase in AGAAVE violence.

### ➤ WHAT ARE THE TARGETS?

AGAAVE adherents most often target federal, state, or local government officials or agencies, as well as law enforcement officers. Some may select military-related targets or candidates for public office.

### ➤ WHY NOW?

Following years of significant, politically charged events, there has been a marked increase in AGAAVE violence across the country. As indictments continue for the Jan. 6 breach of the U.S. Capitol, distrust and anger serve as a motivation behind recent high-profile AGAAVE events.

## ▶ THIS ISN'T NEW

AGAAVE rhetoric describes two catalyst events as instances of government overreach – three killed in Ruby Ridge, Idaho, in 1992, and 86 killed in Waco, Texas, 1993. This stoked pre-existing anti-government fervor.

1995

### Oklahoma City Bombing

- ▶ Antigovernment extremist Timothy McVeigh exploded a truck bomb by a federal building to retaliate for Ruby Ridge and Waco.
- ▶ 168 were killed; hundreds were injured.

2010

### Pentagon Shooting

- ▶ An antigovernment extremist shot and wounded two Pentagon police officers in Arlington, Virginia.
- ▶ The attacker had authored a blog on government overreach, perception of theft of personal property.

2016

### Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Occupation

- ▶ Antigovernment extremists seized and occupied the refuge, starting a 40-day armed standoff.

2020

### Attempted Kidnapping of Michigan Governor

- ▶ 13 men were arrested for plotting to kidnap Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.
- ▶ The attempt was, in part, motivated by Whitmer's early response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including implementation of strict public health measures.
- ▶ The suspects were purportedly tied to the paramilitary group, Wolverine Watchman, which shares beliefs with the antigovernment Boogaloo movement.

2021

### Boogaloo Boi Plot Against Law Enforcement

- ▶ Two Washington state men were indicted on federal charges for plotting to use explosives against law enforcement, "whom they perceived to engage in over-aggressive law enforcement action," according to court records.
- ▶ Both identified with the anti-authority, anti-police Boogaloo movement.

1996

### The Montana Freemen Standoff

- ▶ An 81-day armed standoff between federal government and members of the Montana Freemen.

2014

### Foiled antigovernment plot

- ▶ FBI agents arrested three members of a Georgia militia group in connection with a plot to launch attacks on the federal government.
- ▶ The individuals had said in an online chat they hoped the attacks would spark a militia uprising against the government.

2017

### Mass Shooting at Congressional Baseball Practice

- ▶ An Illinois man opened fire at a practice for the annual Republican congressional baseball game in Alexandria, Virginia.
- ▶ He was killed by law enforcement after a stand-off, but not before wounding six, including U.S. Rep. Steve Scalise of Louisiana.

2021

### Breach at the U.S. Capitol

- ▶ On Jan. 6, extremist group members and some rally attendees attacked the U.S. Capitol to stop the certification of the 2020 U.S. presidential election.
- ▶ Over 800 U.S. persons have been charged with offenses such as seditious conspiracy against the government, trespassing, and assaulting law enforcement.

## ▶ WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Report suspicious activity to the appropriate authorities

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Request a Community Awareness Briefing for your area

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