

Aug. 31, 2023

## **FACT SHEET: Justice Department's Election Threats Task Force**

To date, the Department has announced the following enforcement actions involving threats to the election community:

1. [United States v. Solomon Pena et al.](#) (District of New Mexico): Charged with conspiracy, interference with federally protected activities through violence, and firearms offenses for an alleged shooting spree targeting the homes of elected officials and a candidate for office.
2. [United States v. Katelyn Jones](#) (Eastern District of Michigan): Pleaded guilty to sending multiple threatening communications to a Michigan election official in the wake of the 2020 election.
3. [United States v. Chad Stark](#) (Northern District of Georgia): Pleaded guilty to posting a message online threatening several Georgia public officials following the 2020 election.
4. [United States v. Travis Ford](#) (District of Nebraska): Sentenced to one and a half years in prison for making multiple threatening posts on an Instagram page associated with a Colorado election official.
5. [United States v. James Clark](#) (District of Arizona): Pleaded guilty to sending a communication containing a bomb threat to an election official in the Arizona Secretary of State's office.
6. [United States v. Walter Lee Hoornstra](#) (Western District of Missouri): Charged for allegedly leaving a voicemail containing a threat on the personal cell phone of an election official in the Maricopa County Recorder's Office in Maricopa County, Arizona.
7. [United States v. Mark Rissi](#) (District of Arizona): Sentenced to two and a half years in prison for sending threatening communications to an election official on the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors and to an official with the Office of the Arizona Attorney General.
8. [United States v. Joshua Lubitz](#) (Southern District of Florida): Pleaded guilty to threatening poll workers for aiding voters.
9. [United States v. Frederick Goltz](#) (Northern District of Texas): Sentenced to three and a half years in prison for suggesting a "mass shooting of poll workers" and threatening two Maricopa County officials and their children.
10. [United States v. Gary Koch](#) (Western District of Kentucky): Pleaded guilty to mailing a threat to a political candidate.
11. [United States v. Jessica Higginbotham](#) (Middle District of Georgia): Sentenced to one and a half years in prison for sending a threatening message to bomb the local headquarters of

a political party the day before U.S. Senators from Georgia were in town for campaign events.

12. [\*United States v. Joshua Russell\*](#) (District of Arizona): Pleaded guilty to sending threatening communications to an election official with the Arizona Secretary of State's Office.
13. *United States v. Andrew Nickels* (Eastern District of Michigan): Charged for allegedly threatening a Michigan election official.

*\* All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.*

*\*\* The list of cases above does not include a defendant who was charged and acquitted after a jury trial.*

Announced by Attorney General Merrick B. Garland and launched by Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco in June 2021, the task force has led the Department's efforts to address threats of violence against election workers, and to ensure that all election workers – whether elected, appointed, or volunteer – are able to do their jobs free from threats and intimidation. The task force engages with the election community and state and local law enforcement to assess allegations and reports of threats against election workers, and has investigated and prosecuted these matters where appropriate, in partnership with FBI Field Offices and U.S. Attorneys' Offices throughout the country. Two years after its formation, the task force is continuing this work and supporting the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and FBI Field Offices nationwide as they carry on the critical work that the task force has begun.

Under the leadership of Deputy Attorney General Monaco, the task force is led by the Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section and includes several other entities within the Department of Justice, including the Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section of the Criminal Division, the Civil Rights Division, the National Security Division, and the FBI, as well as key interagency partners, such as the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. For more information regarding the Justice Department's efforts to combat threats against election workers, read the Deputy Attorney General's [memo](#).

To report suspected threats or violent acts, contact your local FBI office and request to speak with the Election Crimes Coordinator. Contact information for every FBI field office may be found at [www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices/](http://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices/). You may also contact the FBI at 1-800-CALL-FBI (225-5324) or file an online complaint at [www.tips.fbi.gov](http://www.tips.fbi.gov). Complaints submitted will be reviewed by the task force and referred for investigation or response accordingly. If someone is in imminent danger or risk of harm, contact 911 or your local police immediately.

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