

## **Statement on the Tree of Life Synagogue Massacre**

**By Lori Tremmel Freeman, CEO**

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The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), an organization committed to principles of social justice, denounces the actions of Saturday, October 27 that took the lives of 11 congregants of the Pittsburgh's Tree of Life synagogue and wounded four police officers who tried to prevent it. This mass murder of worshippers is among the deadliest acts on the Jewish community in U.S. history. All of the dead were faithful members of the synagogue's Jewish community, finding strength in a vibrant faith that welcomed all through its doors.

Anti-Semitic acts have been increasing in the U.S., fueled by careless, incendiary, and conspiracy-fueled political and hate speech that demonizes not only Jews, but Muslims, immigrants, the LGBTQ community, and people of color. The Anti-Defamation League notes that anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S. surged 57% in 2017, representing the largest year-on-year increase since the ADL began collecting data in 1979. Incidents were reported in all 50 U.S. states for the first time since 2010, with higher numbers reported in areas with large Jewish populations. With hate speech and its outcomes fueling racism – itself a public health crisis that harms communities – we all become less safe.

We cannot continue to allow the normalization of hate speech and rhetoric to destroy our communities, nor discuss these almost-daily shootings without mentioning that pervasive gun violence in the U.S. is a public health epidemic. Funding for research to address gun violence continues to be virtually non-existent. We need a strong federal commitment to gun violence research to support the ultimate goal of informing and guiding public policy. As always, NACCHO remains committed to providing resources, training, and guidance to their local health department members to help in their response to this ongoing public health crisis. These include Suspicious Activity Training, Active Shooter and Explosive Device, and Risk Communications, below. Updated resources from Department of Human Services can be found [here](#). The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response also has relevant resources available [here](#).

### **Suspicious Activity and Active Shooter Resources**

- [Active Shooter and Complex Attack Resources](#)
- Resources to promote the "[If you see something, say something](#)" campaign
- Training for personnel on recognizing and supporting suspicious activity
- Quick list of [indicators](#)
- [Suspicious Activity Reporting Healthcare and Public Health Training](#)

- [Active Shooter Planning and Response in a Healthcare Setting](#)
- [Incorporating Active Shooter Incident Planning into Healthcare Facility Emergency Operations Plans](#)
- [MESH Coalition Active Shooter Training \[Video\]](#)
- [FBI active shooter resources](#)
- ASPR Tracie collections on [workplace violence](#)
- ASPR Tracie collections on [explosives and mass shooting](#)
- [Counter-IED training and awareness resources](#)
- Department of Homeland Security [active shooter and complex attack resources list](#)

### **Risk Communications Resources**

- [NACCHO policy statement on risk communications capacity](#)
- [Challenges and developments in risk communication](#)
- CDC's [crisis and emergency risk communications information](#)

### **Psychological First Aid and Mental Health Resources**

- [Self-study program on Psychological First Aid](#)
- [Psychological First Aid Field Manual](#)
- [How Medical Reserve Corps units are using Psychological First Aid](#)
- [Tips for emergency and disaster response workers](#)
- SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline: Call **1-800-985-5990** or text **TalkWithUs to 66746** to connect with a trained crisis counselor.