

# Three reported dead, nine injured in shooting at Planned Parenthood in Colorado

By our reporter  
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Three people have been killed and at least nine others injured in a shooting at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, Colorado, according to reports emerging late in the evening on Friday.

Local officials reported that the suspect in the shooting was in custody by Friday night, after an hours-long standoff. Few details had yet emerged, however, including the identity of the shooter, who was described as a white man wearing a trench coat.

Among the dead were two civilians and one police officer, officials announced at a news conference. The standoff lasted from 11:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. local time.

Witnesses reported hearing many gunshots in the compound during the course of the standoff. There were also reports that the gunman had brought unidentified devices with him into the clinic, which officials indicated might be explosives.

Planned Parenthood, the largest provider of reproductive health care for women in the US, has been repeatedly targeted by right-wing political forces for performing abortions and providing birth control. About five million women use the organization's services each year, the majority poor and working class.

Vicki Coward, president of Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains, released a statement saying, "We don't yet know the full circumstances and motives behind this criminal action, and we don't yet know if Planned Parenthood was in fact the target of this attack." However, "We share the concerns of many Americans that extremists are creating a poisonous environment that feeds domestic terrorism in this country."

Over the summer, Planned Parenthood was the subject of a right-wing smear campaign, backed by significant sections of the political establishment,

involving doctored videos alleging that members of the organization were selling fetal tissue for profit. The campaign was led by an anti-abortion group called the Center for Medical Progress.

In Late September, House Republicans held a five-hour hearing to question Planned Parenthood President Cecile Richards over the videos, amidst a campaign to cut off any funding for the organization.

Threats against the organization and other abortion providers have increased in line with this smear campaign. Four fires at Planned Parenthood clinics in recent months are being investigated as possible arson attacks.

Nicki Saporta, president of National Abortion Federation, told the *Guardian* newspaper in September, "We track this, so it's real, it's frightening and very concerning. It's been dramatic, in terms of what clinics are reporting to us and what we are ourselves uncovering."

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, two fires at Planned Parenthood clinics in October in Thousand Oaks, California and Pullman, Washington were the result of firebombing attacks. Neither attack has resulted in any arrests.

David S. Cohen, a law professor at Drexel University, told the SPLC at the time that "there is a small contingent of anti-abortion terrorist who are seizing on this moment to further target clinics and providers. It's scary to contemplate what might happen next."

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