

Godfrey teen charged after "'potentially chaotic, deadly'" terrorist threats

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - An 18-year-old **Godfrey** teen - **Keaun L. Cook** - has been arrested and charged with one count of Material Support for Terrorism and one count of Making a Terrorist Threat.

An announcement by **Madison County State's Attorney Thomas Gibbons** and **Madison County Sheriff John Lakin** was made at a 3:30 p.m. press conference at the Madison County Sheriff's Office in Edwardsville.

Gibbons said both charges are considered Class X felonies.

A press release said on Aug. 24, 2016, Madison County Sheriff's Deputies were dispatched to the 1300 block of Sir Galahad Lane in Godfrey in reference to a welfare check. In meeting with Cook, and his family members, sheriff's deputies developed evidence linking Cook to possible regional terrorist threats.

Preliminary investigation confirms that Cook has been in contact with individuals he believed would be capable of committing a mass casualty terrorist attack. Federal authorities were contacted to assist in the investigation, both Gibbons and Lakin said.

“Thanks to the individual who immediately alerted authorities of the actions of this man, and the serious response executed by the Madison County Sheriff’s Office, a potentially chaotic and deadly event in the area has been prevented,” State’s Attorney Gibbons said. “My staff is working closely in coordination with the Sheriff’s Office, local law enforcement and federal authorities to ensure that there is no further risk to the public.”

Potential targets and local law enforcement agencies were also contacted immediately to provide heightened security and ensure that no one is at risk. Cook was taken into custody and remains in Madison County Jail.

At this time there, there is no credible evidence of a scheduled event at any one location; however, in the event that evidence of a credible risk is developed, those effected will immediately be notified, the two said.

Lakin and Gibbons said the threat is related to a mass casualty incident at one or more local venues in Madison County. The two did not reveal any of the particular locations, but police departments have been notified as have the venues to take any necessary security precautions.

“There is no credible evidence at this time to suggest he was connected with anyone else in the area,” Gibbons said.

So far, the two said at the press conference that no materials have been yet recovered and that it is an ongoing investigation.

Both acknowledged this is and will be a very, very serious investigation.

During the press conference, it was stated they believe the suspect was born in the United States. He was living with the family and was arrested at home.

Cook is currently in custody at the Madison County Jail in Edwardsville. Cook’s bond was set at \$150,000. Making A Terrorist Threat is a Class X felony with a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison. Material Support For Terrorism is a Class X felony with a maximum penalty of 40 years in prison.

“We believe the community is safe and we want to continue to ensure the safety of Madison County,” Gibbons said.

These charges, as well as the statements made herein, are based upon probable cause. The defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.



[Madelaine Gerard also contributed to this story.](#)