



## NEWS RELEASE

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United States Attorney's Office  
Central District of California

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### **Mother of San Bernardino Shooter Agrees to Plead Guilty to Destroying Evidence Related to Her Son's 2015 Terrorist Attack**

*RIVERSIDE, California* – The mother of Syed Rizwan Farook, the male shooter in 2015 San Bernardino terrorist attack, has agreed to plead guilty to a federal criminal charge of intending to impede a federal criminal investigation by shredding a map her son generated in connection with the attack.

Rafia Sultana Shareef, a.k.a. Rafia Farook, 66, of Corona, has agreed to plead guilty to a one-count information charging her with alteration, destruction, and mutilation of records. The criminal information and related plea agreement were filed Monday in United States District Court in Riverside, and the documents became publicly available today.

Shareef is scheduled to make her initial appearance in federal court in Riverside on March 16.

According to her plea agreement, on December 2, 2015, Shareef was living at a Redlands residence she shared with her son and his wife, Tashfeen Malik, and her grandchild. At approximately 8 a.m. on that day, Farook and Malik left the family home and left their infant child with Shareef, falsely telling her that they were going to a medical appointment.

Instead, Farook and Malik drove a black SUV that Farook had rented a few days earlier to the Inland Regional Center (IRC) in San Bernardino. Farook entered the IRC alone, while Malik waited inside the SUV, which was parked at the IRC parking lot. Farook placed a bag containing a bomb in a conference room where his coworkers were holding an event. After some time, Farook and Malik left the IRC, then returned at approximately 10:58 a.m. dressed in black tactical gear.

Approaching the IRC on foot from the exterior, Farook and Malik opened fire using high-powered firearms on individuals outside and inside the venue, killing 14 people and wounding at least 22 others. At approximately 11:01 a.m., Farook and Malik departed the IRC and began driving around San Bernardino. A few hours later, Farook

and Malik engaged in a firefight with law enforcement officers that resulted in the wounding of one policeman and their own deaths.

Sometime between 11:43 a.m. and 3:06 p.m., while Shareef was still at her home, she learned that law enforcement had identified her son as a suspect in the IRC attack, the plea agreement states. In the presence of family members that afternoon, Shareef expressed her belief that her son and daughter-in-law had perpetrated the IRC attack, according to the plea agreement.

Prior to leaving the family home with her infant grandchild at 3:41 p.m., Shareef went into her son's bedroom, grabbed at least one document that appeared to be a map, and fed it into a shredder, according to the plea agreement. Shareef admitted that she knew her son had produced the document, and she believed it was directly related to his planning of the IRC attack.

Once she pleads guilty to the felony charge, Shareef will face a maximum statutory sentence of 20 years in federal prison, but the plea agreement contemplates a sentence of no more than 18 months.

This matter was investigated by the FBI. This case stems from the broader investigation of the San Bernardino attack by members of the Inland Empire Joint Terrorism Task Force, which includes the FBI; the San Bernardino Police Department; the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Homeland Security Investigations; the Riverside County Sheriff's Department; the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office; the Chino Police Department; the Redlands Police Department; the Ontario Police Department; the Corona Police Department; and the Riverside Police Department.

The case against Shareef is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Christopher D. Grigg, Chief of the Terrorism and Export Crimes Section; Melanie Sartoris of the General Crimes Section; and Julius J. Nam of the Criminal Appeals Section. Justice Department Trial Attorneys Alicia Cook and C. Alexandria Bogle of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section provided substantial support.

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