



## The United States Department of Justice

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June 27, 2025

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### Chicago Man Convicted of Conspiring to Provide Material Support to ISIS

WASHINGTON — A Chicago man was convicted today of conspiring to provide material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) by using social media to encourage attacks on ISIS’s enemies and recruit new ISIS members.

According to court documents, Ashraf Al Safoo, 41, was a leader of Khattab Media Foundation, a sophisticated online organization that swore allegiance to ISIS and created and disseminated threats and ISIS propaganda on social media and other online platforms. Al Safoo and other members of Khattab created and posted pro-ISIS videos, articles, essays, and infographics at the direction of, and in coordination with, ISIS. Much of Khattab’s propaganda promoted violent jihad on behalf of the terrorist group.

In one posting, Al Safoo encouraged Khattab members to post pro-ISIS information “to cause confusion and spread terror within the hearts of those who disbelieved.” In another posting, Al Safoo wrote, “Work hard, brothers, edit the issue into short clips, take the pictures out of it and publish the efforts of your brothers in the pages of the apostates. Participate in the war, and spread terror, the [Islamic] State does not want you to watch it only, rather, it incites you, and if you are unable to, use it to incite others.”

Many of Khattab’s postings included images of violence, celebrations of terrorist attacks and mass shootings in the United States, and encouragement for “lone wolf” attacks in western countries.

Al Safoo was [arrested](#) in Chicago in 2018. After a bench trial in U.S. District Court in Chicago, U.S. District Judge John Robert Blakey found Al Safoo guilty of one count of conspiracy to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization, one count of conspiracy to transmit threats in interstate commerce, one count of conspiracy to

intentionally access a protected computer without authorization, four counts of intentionally accessing a protected computer without authorization, and four counts of providing material support to a foreign terrorist organization.

The convictions carry a maximum penalty of 130 years in prison. Sentencing is scheduled for Oct. 9. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Assistant Attorney General John A. Eisenberg of the Justice Department's National Security Division, U.S. Attorney Andrew S. Boutros for the Northern District of Illinois, and Assistant Director Donald M. Holstead of the FBI's Counterterrorism Division made the announcement.

The FBI Chicago Field Office is investigating the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Melody Wells, Barry Jonas, and Thomas P. Peabody for the Northern District of Illinois, and Trial Attorney Andrew J. Dixon of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section are prosecuting the case.

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