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## Orlando shooting

### Orlando shooting: Suspect had money woes

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It's unclear whether Jason Rodriguez gave any warning signs before he walked into Orlando's Gateway Center, where police say he shot and wounded five people and killed one, and authorities may never fully understand his motivation.

But Rodriguez, fired two years ago by the company he targeted, has one characteristic not unusual among mass shooters: money problems.

"This guy is a compilation of the front page of the entire year: unemployment, foreclosure, bankruptcy, divorce — all of the stresses," Public Defender Bob Wesley, who is representing Rodriguez, said Saturday.



Workplace killings, in particular, often can be linked to an economic motivation.

"The person has lost a job, the person has been demoted, the person feels like he's about to lose his job — it's not the whole story, but it's part of the motive," said Charles Ewing, a forensic psychologist and law professor at University at Buffalo Law School.

Money problems can lead to depression, which can compound the problems of someone already struggling with mental-health issues.

People who commit mass shootings typically are suffering from serious depression and are usually suicidal as well as homicidal, Ewing said.

Wesley didn't know whether Rodriguez was on medication. The lawyer said a mental-health evaluation of the former draftsman would be conducted.

Rodriguez's situation "looks like a classic, stress overload," combined with a chemical imbalance, said Wesley, who often represents clients who have a history of mental illness.

Wesley said Rodriguez was under great stress, including a series of job losses.

"Nobody intentionally goes from solving complex mechanical problems ... to trying to solve what type of condiments to put on a sandwich," Wesley said.

Wesley also told the *Orlando Sentinel* that people react to stress in a variety of ways.

And one of the great factors no one has control over is genetic, he said.

"We're all put together differently chemically," Wesley said. "If you inherit a predisposition or mental-health problems, that will trump everything else."

Problems earlier in life also can contribute to imbalances.

"When you go back and do a psychological autopsy, you'll probably be able to find childhood events or events in adolescence that contributed," said Rande Matteson, a professor of criminal justice at Saint Leo University. "Many times, those things are overlooked."

But a lot of people have faced the same life challenges, and they aren't suspected of fatally shooting a man and injuring several others at their former workplace.

"There's not one template to predict who will snap and at what point," Matteson said.

Someone struggling with some underlying problems may not be able to see any alternatives to acting out in an angry event, but it's difficult to figure out when someone has reached that point, Matteson said.

Most depressed people don't kill themselves or anyone else, but friends, family and co-workers should take someone seriously if the person makes a threat to kill another person or multiple people, Ewing said.

"In many of these cases, people have made threats, or they've told their victims or other people what they plan to do," he said.

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