5 dead, 9 injured in shooting at Fort Lauderdale Airport

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News media are reporting that several people have been shot at Fort Lauderdale International Airport. Passengers seen assembling on the tarmac away from the airport building. (Jan 6) AP.

MIAMI — A gunman opened fire on passengers in a baggage claim area at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International airport Friday, killing 5 people and injuring nine, according to Sen. Bill Nelson. The gunman was taken into custody.

Not long after the incident, reports emerged of a second possible shooter in Terminal 1by a man described by police at the scene as a white male wearing a white tee-shirt . According to police radio traffic, an "active shooter" was in the upper floors of the terminal.

The Transportation Security Administration alerted on Twitter that there was an "active shooter" at the airport and cautioned people in the area to "shelter in place."

The second incident sent passengers dropping to the ground and cowering behind cars.

The senator, a Florida Democrat, tells MSNBC that the initial gunman was identified as 26-year-old Esteban Santiago and was carrying a military I.D.

The Broward County sheriff's office reported "multiple dead" in the melee.

The shooting broke out around noon beside the baggage claim area at Terminal 2, which serves Delta Airlines.

Witnesses said the gunman fired randomly at people gathered near a baggage carousel, reloading several times.

One passenger, Mark Lea, tells MSNBC that the man was "just randomly shooting people" with a 9 mm pistol, without saying a word to anyone. After emptying about 3 magazines of bullets, the shooter then got down on the

ground, spreadeagled and waited for police to come and subdue him.

Lea said the gunman was about 5-7, 165 pounds and was wearing a blue tee-shirt. He said the gunman did not say anything as he opened fire only a few feet away from him.

"He wasn't targeting anyone particular, just random shooting at people," Lea tells MSNBC.

Another witness. John Schicher, tells MSNBC that the shooter appeared to be wearing a blue Star Wars tee-shirt.

Early word on the incident came from a tweet b y Ari Fleischer, former White House spokesman for President George W. Bush.

"I'm at the Ft. Lauderdale Airport," Fleischer tweeted. "Shots have been fired. Everyone is running."

The shooting broke out on the lower level of the airport, according to reports from the scene.

@AriFleischer I'm at the Ft. Lauderdale Airport. Shots have been fired. Everyone is running.

Ft. Lauderdale-Hollywood airport reported on Twitter an "ongoing incident" at the baggage claim area of Terminal 2. The area of gates D4 and D5 largely services Delta flights. Itg said that all services are temporarily suspect at the airport.

Broward County emergency medical units were dispatched to the tarmac near Terminal 2 where dozens of passengers were huddled together.