Reporting Elder Abuse

Everyone, not just mandated reporters, should report elder abuse if they suspect it has occurred.

If in doubt, always report.

Reporting often leads to interventions that can save property, money, dignity, or a life.

How to Report Elder Abuse

If a known or suspected instance of elder abuse has occurred in a long-term care facility like a nursing home, residential care facility for the elderly, or assisted living facility, the report should be made to the local Long-Term Care Ombudsman, the licensing agency (for nursing homes, Licensing and Certification Program of the California Department of Public Health, and for non-medical residential care facilities and assisted living, the Community Care Licensing Division of the California Department of Social Services), local law enforcement, and the Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse.

If the abuse has occurred outside of a long-term care facility, reports should be made to the local Adult Protective Services agency and local law enforcement.

The reporting person is protected from both criminal and civil liability.

Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse
1-800-722-0432
http://oag.ca.gov/bmfea/reporting

California Ombudsman Services
1-800-510-2020

Department of Public Health Directory
http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/facilities/Pages/LCDistrictOffices.aspx

California Adult Protective Services Directory
http://www.cdss.ca.gov/agedblinddisabled/PG2300.htm

California Department of Public Health Directory
http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/LnC/Pages/LnC.aspx

California Department of Social Services Reporting
http://www.ccld.ca.gov/PG408.htm

For more information or if you feel that your organization could benefit from additional training materials regarding elder abuse please call, email or write to our Field Representative at:

Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
Office: 916-621-1834
Email: *bmfeaoutreach@doj.ca.gov*

Visit our web site for more information about elder abuse or to submit a report online:
http://oag.ca.gov/bmfea/

Elder Abuse

What You Should Know

Presented by the
California Department of Justice

What is Elder Abuse?

Elder abuse includes abuse of both elders and dependent adults, and includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

Physical abuse includes:

- Physical assault
- Sexual assault
- Unreasonable physical constraint
- Deprivation of food or water
- Inappropriate use of physical or chemical restraint

Emotional abuse includes:

- Verbal assaults, threats, and intimidation
- Subjection to fear, isolation or emotional stress
- Withholding emotional support
- Confinement

Neglect includes:

- Failure to aid with personal hygiene
- Failure to provide clothing and shelter
- Failure to provide medical care
- Failure to protect from health or safety hazards
- Failure to prevent malnutrition or dehydration
- Allowing self-neglect

Recognizing The Warning Signs

What are the indicators of physical and emotional abuse?

While these are common signs of abuse, it is important to be diligent and notice anything that may indicate abuse.

- Uncombed or matted hair
- Unkempt or dirty appearance
- Untreated medical conditions
- Malnourishment or dehydration
- Unexplained bruises or welts
- Burns caused by scalding water, cigarettes, or ropes
- Any injury that reflects the shape of an object such as a belt, cord, or hand
- Withdrawn attitude
- Abnormal confusion or forgetfulness
- Depression or anxiety
- Fear of talking openly
- Secretiveness

What is Financial Elder Abuse?

Financial elder abuse is any theft or embezzlement of money or any other property from an elder. Taking money from a wallet, manipulating an elder to turn over money, or using an elder's phone for long distance calls can all be considered financial abuse. This is a serious form of abuse as it can leave elders unable to provide for their needs and fearful of what tomorrow will hold. Some examples of financial elder abuse are:

- Stealing money
- Intercepting cash or checks
- Fraudulently convincing an elder to hand over money
- Telemarketing fraud
- Identity theft
- Predatory lending
- Home improvement scams

Are You a Mandated Reporter?

California law requires certain individuals, called mandated reporters, to report suspected instances of elder abuse. This is a partial list of mandated reporters:

- Physicians and medical professionals
- Clergy
- Bank employees
- Employees of a health care facility
- Any individual assuming care, responsibility or custody of an elderly person
- Mandated reporters who fail to report may be guilty of a crime (California Welfare and Institutions Code 15630)