



# KNOW ABUSE REPORT ABUSE

## ELDER AND DEPENDENT ADULT ABUSE AWARENESS

### REPORT ABUSE TODAY!

Adult Protective Services: 1-800-491-7123 or Office on Aging: 1-800-510-2020

#### HOW BIG OF AN ISSUE IS ELDER ABUSE IN CALIFORNIA?

Here in California, each Adult Protective Services (APS) agency receives as many as 10,000 reports of elder and dependent adult abuse per month, and reports are increasing. That equates to an estimated 120,000 cases of reported abuse PER YEAR in California. What makes this number even more alarming is that for every one (1) case of abuse that is reported, four (4) cases (or approximately 600,000 cases) are not.

#### THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA RECOGNIZES 6 TYPES OF ABUSE:

- ⇒ **Self-Neglect** – Refusal or failure to provide oneself with adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, medication (when indicated), and safety precautions.
- ⇒ **Physical Abuse** – The use of physical force that may result in bodily injury, physical pain, or impairment; or any physical injury to an adult that is not accidental.
- ⇒ **Neglect by Others** – The active or passive failure to provide basic care or services necessary to maintain the health and safety of an adult.
- ⇒ **Sexual Abuse** – Sexual contact with a non-consenting adult or with an adult considered incapable of consenting to a sexual act.
- ⇒ **Financial Abuse**– The illegal or unethical exploitation and/or use of a person’s funds, property, or other assets.
- ⇒ **Mental Abuse** – Verbal or emotional abuse includes threatening physical harm or threatening or causing significant emotional harm to an adult through the use of derogatory or inappropriate names, insults, verbal assaults, profanity, or ridicule; harassment, coercion, threats, intimidation, humiliation, or mental cruelty; or inappropriate sexual comments.



*Abuse doesn't happen in a vacuum. Often one type of abuse leads to another. Victims often suffer from multiple forms of abuse. For example, an older adult can be neglected by his or her family members, whose only interest is control over the person's financial assets.*

## DON'T MISS THE SIGNS OF ABUSE:

⇒ Lack of basic amenities — A cluttered, filthy living environment; unexplained or uncharacteristic changes in behavior; unexplained sexually transmitted diseases; isolation by a caregiver; unpaid bills, new credit cards and/or increased cash withdrawals; and/or harassment, coercion, intimidation, or humiliation.

## How to Report Cases of Abuse:

### ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Adult Protective Services (APS) responds to reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation from individuals, concerned citizens, social service and health care providers, and law enforcement agencies about developmental disabled adults, physically and mentally disabled adults, and older adults.

**Riverside County APS hotline number: (800) 491-7123**

### California State LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) investigates elder abuse complaints in long-term care facilities and residential care facilities for older adults. The program attempts to resolve complaints made by, or on behalf of, individuals residing in these facilities, including nursing homes, residential care facilities for the elderly, and assisted living facilities. **The California CRISISline number: 1-800-231-4024 ● Riverside County LTCOP number: (800) 510-2020**

### INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE MANDATED TO REPORT ELDER ABUSE

California law mandates that certain individuals report elder or dependent adult abuse. Failure to do so is a crime.

- ⇒ **WHO:** Persons who are responsible, in whole or part, for care or custody of an elder or dependent adult including: administrators, supervisors and licensed staff of a public or private facility that provides care or services; an adult care custodian, a health practitioner; employees of County adult protective services agencies; local law enforcement; and employees of financial institutions.
- ⇒ **WHEN TO REPORT:** Immediately by telephone to the appropriate local agency AND by written report via the California Department of Social Services form entitled “Report of Suspected Dependent Abuse/Elder Abuse” (SOC 341), within two working days.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF AN ALLEGED VICTIM DOES NOT WANT TO REPORT THE ABUSE?

Adult victims of alleged abuse and neglect have a right to decline services. Clients are often reluctant to report abuse and can deny allegations, recant previous statements, and make it difficult to provide services or to prosecute crimes. Often fear of retaliation; embarrassment or shame; unwillingness to recognize that the abuse is happening; protection of a family member who may also be the perpetrator; believe the abuse is deserved; fear of the government; or fear of losing independence or being institutionalized, result in unreported abuse.

*It is important to report ALL suspected abuse, even if the victim is reluctant or unwilling to cooperate. The investigating agency can provide assistance with resolving the matter.*

**Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month is a state-wide campaign with many partners, including:**

