

# Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

## Types of Elder Abuse and The Warning Signs

### Physical Abuse

- Unexplained bruises, welts, sores, cuts or abrasions in odd places
- Bruising, fractures and other injuries which may be in different stages of healing
- Bruising or other markings in the shape of objects used to inflict injuries
- Bruising on upper arms from shaking
- Cigar and cigarette burns
- Rope burns
- Injury that has not been cared for properly
- Pain from touching
- Dehydration or malnutrition without illness-related cause
- Poor coloration
- Sunken eyes or cheeks
- Inappropriate administration of medication
- Soiled clothing or bed
- Forced isolation
- Time lags between the “injury or fall” and medical treatment
- Fear
- Non-responsiveness, resignation, ambivalence
- Contradictory statements, implausible stories
- Hesitation to talk openly
- Confusion or disorientation

### Sexual Abuse

- Unexplained genital infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Torn or bloody underclothes
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Older adult is withdrawn, shameful, anxious

### Psychological/Emotional Abuse

- Fear of speaking in front of caretaker

- Trembling, cowering, lack of eye contact
- Anxious to please
- Eating disorders
- Self medication with alcohol or prescriptions
- Depression and withdrawal
- Agitation and anger
- Low self-esteem

### Financial Abuse/Exploitation

- Goes to the bank with a person who encourages them to withdraw large amounts of cash or coerces them into making transactions
- Unusual banking activity such as large withdrawals during a short time period, switching from one bank to another, ATM activity by a homebound older adult
- Concerned or confused about “missing” funds from their accounts
- Isolated from others
- Unable to remember financial transactions or signing paperwork
- Frequent expensive gifts from elder to caregiver
- Older adult’s personal belongings, papers and credit cards are missing
- Numerous unpaid bills
- A recently written will when the person seems incapable of writing a will
- Bank and credit card statements no longer come to the older adult
- Caregiver’s name added to bank account
- Older adult signs on loan
- Frequent checks made out to “cash”
- Older adult unaware of reason for appointment with banker or attorney
- Signatures on checks or legal documents that do not resemble older adult’s

### Neglect

- Decubitus ulcers (bedsores)
- Poor hygiene
- Fleas and lice on individual
- Malnourished and dehydrated
- Little or no food available
- Soiled or urine-soaked bedding
- Unsanitary/unsafe living conditions
- Indications of unusual confinement
- Improper use of medication
- Victim appears detached, unresponsive, helpless

### Self-Neglect

Self-neglect, the most common form of neglect among older adults, occurs when older adults, by choice or by lack of awareness, live in ways that are harmful to themselves. They may be unwilling or unable to perform essential self-care tasks such as:

- providing food and clothing
- getting the right medical care
- maintaining personal hygiene
- managing financial affairs



## How do you talk to a person you think is abused or neglected?

Police Departments recommend the following four steps:

1. Establish trust/rapport
2. Get a general narrative of what happened
3. Get more specifics on what happened
4. Close with "friendly" conversation

***Everyone who sees elder abuse or neglect should report it.  
Elder abuse is a crime  
and it must be reported and stopped.***

## Where do I report elder abuse, neglect or exploitation?

To report an emergency Dial 911

Department of Economic Security  
Adult Protective Services (APS)

### Adult Abuse 24-Hour Hotline:

1-877-SOS-ADULT (1-877-767-2385)  
TDD: 1-877-815-8390

#### To Report Abuse in a Care Facility:

Department of Health Services	(602) 674-9775
Pima County Elder Abuse Task Force	(520) 628-6884
Oro Valley Police Department	(520) 229-4900
Green Valley Pima County Sheriff's Dept.	(520) 547-6711
Tucson Police Department	(520) 791-4441
South Tucson Police Department	(520) 622-0655

***No one should be reluctant to report elder abuse or let the fear of being wrong or the fear of retaliation keep them from reporting.  
Callers may remain anonymous!***

## What happens when the Department of Economic Security APS conducts an evaluation into allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation?

- If it is an emergency, APS will contact the police, paramedics or other emergency personnel immediately.
- When APS can confirm abuse or neglect, they will report their findings to the proper authorities for action.
- APS will offer services on a voluntary or involuntary basis depending on the degree of existing danger and the client's ability to understand the situation.
- If signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation are not found, the APS caseworker will close the case.

*Just because APS closes a case, that does not mean that some type of abuse, neglect or exploitation did not occur. The victim might withhold the truth from the caseworker and there may not be any visible signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Many times, reports of self-neglect fall into this category.*

*In Arizona, a competent adult has the freedom to choose to live in situations that may be below the standards set by society. If you continue to witness signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation after the APS caseworker's initial visit, please contact APS with as much additional information as possible. If you think that the case has been closed, please call the APS hotline again and make a new referral.*

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### What other elder abuse resources are available?

Area Agency on Aging

**24-Hour Senior  
HELPLINE  
1-888-264-2258**

Area Agency on Aging Region 2 Pima County  
**Pima Council on Aging (520) 790-7262**

### Office of the Attorney General Terry Goddard

Consumer Information/Complaints (520) 628-6504

Office of Victim Service (520)-628-6456

Elder Law Hotline 1-800-231-5441

Elder Shelter (520) 566-1919

Pima County Attorney (520) 740-5600

Pima County Elder Abuse Hotline (520) 791-5809

State Long Term Care Ombudsman (602) 542-4446

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