



DEFINING ABUSE

Physical abuse- inflicting physical pain or injury upon an adult.

Sexual abuse- touching, fondling or any other sexual activity with an adult, when the person is unable to understand, unwilling to consent, threatened or physically forced.

Emotional abuse- verbal assaults, threats of maltreatment, harassment or intimidation. Emotional abuse is often coupled with other forms of abuse.

Confinement- restraining or isolating an adult, other than for medical reasons.

Passive neglect- the caregiver's failure to provide an adult with life's necessities, including, but not limited to, food, clothing, shelter or medical care. No new affirmative duty of care is created.

Willful deprivation- deliberately denying an adult medication, medical care, shelter, food, a therapeutic device or other physical assistance, and thereby exposing that person to the risk of physical, mental or emotional harm — except when the dependent person has expressed an intent to forego such care.

Financial exploitation- the misuse or withholding of an adult's resources by another, to the disadvantage of the adult and/or for the profit or advantage of someone else.

Self Neglect- A condition that is the result of an eligible adult's inability, due to physical or mental impairments, or both, or a diminished capacity, to perform essential self-care tasks that substantially threaten his or her own health, including: providing essential food, clothing shelter, and health care; and obtaining goods and services necessary to maintain physical health, mental health, emotional well-being, and general safety. This can include compulsive hoarding which significantly impairs the performance of essential self-care tasks or otherwise substantially threatens life or safety.

Abandonment- the desertion or willful forsaking of an eligible adult ban individual responsible for the care and custody of that eligible adult when a reasonable person would continue to provide care and custody.

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966; 711 (TRS).

This material was developed by the Illinois Department on Aging and is partially based on Elder Abuse and Neglect: Causes, Diagnosis and Intervention, by Mary Joy Quinn, R.N., and Susan I. Tomita, M.S.W., and Inadequate Care of the Elderly by Terry T. Fulmer, Ph.D., R.N., and Terrance A. O'Malley, M.D.



IN-HOME PROFESSIONAL



REPORTING ABUSE

Many adults who live at home are at risk of abuse, neglect and financial exploitation by family members and others close to them. Victims of abuse are often isolated and may be afraid or unable to seek help for themselves. In some cases, the only person outside the family who may be aware of potential abuse is an in-home service worker; therefore, it is critical that in-home service workers know the signs of abuse and make reports as needed.

Under the authority of the Illinois Adult Protective Services Act (Public Act 98- 0049), the Illinois Department on Aging administers a statewide intervention program to respond to reports of alleged abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation. Program components include investigation, case planning, advocacy, and referral.

The program places an emphasis on an individual's right to self-determination; no decisions are made about an adult with capacity without that adult's involvement and consent. Every effort is made to respect an individual's choices including where to live. On some occasions, when an individual is unable to participate in decision making, APS will work in the best interest of the individual to reduce their risk of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation.

To make a report, call 1-866- 800-1409 or the local Adult Protective Services provider agency. Reporting is voluntary for most financial professionals.

In-home service workers are mandated reporters of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of individuals over age 60 or 18-59 with a disability. Mandated reporting is required when an individual is unable to make a report for themselves. However, in-home service workers are encouraged to report all incidents of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation to assure the health, welfare, and safety of all individuals they serve. Mandated reporting also covers suspicious deaths. If an in-home service worker has reason to believe an individual's death is related to abuse, neglect, or exploitation, the in-home service worker must make a report to APS. APS will follow-up with law enforcement and the coroner or medical examiner.

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS

In-home service workers should be aware of the possibility of abuse and recognize the signs that it is occurring. By making a report to the Adult Protective Services Program, the worker will ensure a trained, objective caseworker follows up to investigate the allegations and help the adult avoid further abuse. While the following indicators do not necessarily signify abuse, neglect or financial exploitation, they can be important clues in helping to assess the client's situation.

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

- ▶ An injury that has not been cared for properly, pain on touching, cuts, lacerations, or puncture wounds.
- ▶ Weight loss, dehydration or malnourishment not caused by illness.
- ▶ Pallor, sunken eyes or cheeks, eye problems or retinal detachment.
- ▶ Bruises, welts and discoloration (bilaterally on upper arms; clustered on trunk, but may be evident over other areas of the body or are similar in shape to an object); presence of old and new bruises at the same time.
- ▶ Evidence of inadequate care (such as severe bedsores that have not been properly treated); soiled clothing or bed linen; lack of bandages or stitches when injury indicated or evidence of unset broken bones.
- ▶ Poor skin hygiene, absence of hair and/or hemorrhaging below scalp.
- ▶ Burns (may be caused by cigarettes, caustics, acids, friction from ropes or chains, from confinement or contact with other objects).
- ▶ Signs of confinement (locked in a room, tied to furniture or bathroom fixtures).
- ▶ Lack of necessary appliances such as walker, cane or bedside commode; lack of heat, food or water; and unsafe conditions at home.

FAMILY/CAREGIVER INDICATORS

- ▶ The adult may not be able to speak for himself or herself or to see others without the caregiver present.
- ▶ Obvious absence of assistance, attitudes of indifference or anger toward the adult.
- ▶ Family member blames the adult (such as for incontinence).
- ▶ Aggressive behavior toward the adult (threats, insults, harassment or rough physical handling).
- ▶ Previous history of abuse to others.
- ▶ Withholding of security or affection.
- ▶ Problems with alcohol, drugs or mental illness.
- ▶ Family and/or adult is socially isolated.
- ▶ Conflicting accounts of incidents by family, supporters and victim.
- ▶ Unwillingness or reluctance to comply with the care plan.

INDICATORS OF FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION

- ▶ A caregiver or family member with access to an adult's money appears to use the funds for personal gain rather than for the person, resulting in many unpaid bills or overdue rent, for example.
- ▶ An adult does not have adequate food, clothing or personal care items when there appears to be enough money to obtain them.
- ▶ An adult is grossly overcharged for residence or services.
- ▶ An adult loans large sums of money with no arrangement for repayment.
- ▶ An adult complains of deception or theft of property or funds.
- ▶ An adult suddenly changes their will or other financial documents.
- ▶ Indicators of Self-Neglect
- ▶ The adult may be lacking essential food, clothing, shelter and healthcare; is unable to obtain goods and services necessary to maintain physical and mental health, emotional well-being, and general safety; may compulsively hoard large quantities of items and materials that impairs their ability to care for themselves or substantially threatens their life and safety.

PROGRAM PROFILE

When a report is received, a trained Adult Protective Services caseworker responds within a specified time period depending on the severity of the case: within 24 hours for life threatening situations, within 72 hours for most neglect and non-threatening physical abuse situations and up to seven days for most emotional abuse or financial exploitation reports.

Depending on the adult's resources, needs and wishes, interventions may include:

- ▶ Health care services
- ▶ Home care services
- ▶ Nutrition services
- ▶ Adult day services
- ▶ Respite care and support groups for the caregiver
- ▶ Housing assistance
- ▶ Counseling referral for the victim and/or the abuser
- ▶ Review for surrogate decision maker
- ▶ Review of placement needs
- ▶ Emergency responses for housing, food, physical and/or mental health services
- ▶ Financial or legal assistance and protections, such as representative payee, direct deposit, trusts, order of protection, civil suit and/or criminal charges.

For more information, please contact Aging.APS.Training@illinois.gov.

You may also visit:

<https://ilaging.illinois.gov/engage.html>

to learn more about Adult Protective Services and the Illinois Department on Aging.

**Adult Protective Services Hotline:
1-866-800-1409, 24-hour, toll-free**