

FACT SHEET

Adult Protective Services

What are adult protective services?

Adult protective services help vulnerable adults age 60 and older who are in danger of harm, are unable to protect themselves, and may have no one to assist them. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) supervises the state's Adult Protective Services program. ODJFS plans and develops programs and writes rules and regulations pertaining to adult protective services. The county departments of job and family services receive and investigate reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable adults and evaluate the need for protective services. County departments receive guidance from ODJFS.

What types of things are considered abuse?

Abuse is the infliction (by one's self or others) of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation or cruel punishment with resulting physical harm, pain or mental anguish. Abusive maltreatment includes neglect, exploitation, and physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

- **Neglect** is the failure of an adult to provide the goods or services necessary for his or her own safety and/or well-being – such as avoiding physical harm, mental anguish or mental illness – or the failure of a caretaker to provide such goods or services.
- **Exploitation** is the unlawful or improper act of a caretaker using an adult or his/her resources for monetary or personal benefit, profit or gain.
- **Physical abuse** is the intentional use of physical force that results in injury, pain or impairment. It includes pushing, hitting, slapping, pinching and other ways of physically harming a person. It can also mean placing an individual in incorrect positions, force feeding, restraining or giving medication without the person's knowledge.
- **Emotional abuse** occurs when a person is threatened, humiliated, intimidated or otherwise psychologically hurt. It includes the violation of an adult's right to make decisions and the loss of his or her privacy.
- **Sexual abuse** includes rape or other unwanted, nonconsensual sexual contact, but it can also mean forced or coerced nudity, exhibitionism and other non-touching sexual situations, regardless of the age of the perpetrator.

What is the best way to report suspected abuse or neglect?

To make a report of abuse, exploitation or neglect, contact the county department of job and family services in the county where the adult resides or where the incident occurred. During non-business hours, contact local law enforcement. To find the phone number and location of the county agency, go to http://jfs.ohio.gov/county/County_Directory.pdf.