

July is Elder Abuse Awareness Month

Someone you know—a neighbor, a friend, a person who attends your house of worship, may be experiencing elder abuse. During this rough time in our economy, there is an increasing concern with financial exploitation of the elderly...here is what you should know:

Signs of Financial Exploitation:

(FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION is the misuse or withholding of an older person's resources by another, to the disadvantage of the elderly person and/or the profit or advantage of someone else.)

FINANCIAL INDICATORS

- * Unpaid bills when income is adequate
- * Food, clothing & care needs not being met
- * Overcharged for rent or services
- * Personal loans not repaid
- * Complaints of thefts of property or money
- * Missing checks, jewelry or other valuables
- * Power of attorney signed by confused person
- * Suspicious changes in title to property
- * Caregiver overly concerned with person's money
- * Promises of lifelong care in exchange for assets
- * ATM transactions by home-bound elder
- * Utility shut-offs or threats of shut-offs
- * Large telephone bills run up by caregiver
- * Checks for food, etc, written over amount needed
- * Large or unusual bank transactions

HOW DOES A PERSON MAKE AN ELDER ABUSE REPORT?

* Call the Illinois Department on Aging's Senior HelpLine or your local elder abuse agency.

- The Center for Prevention of Abuse - For Peoria, Tazewell, Marshall, Stark, Woodford and Fulton Counties (309) 637-3905
- Department on Aging's Senior HelpLine during regular business hours: 1-800-252-8966
- Department on Aging's After-Hours Elder Abuse Hotline: 1-866-800-1409

* The reporter should be prepared to answer the following questions to the best of his or her ability:

- The alleged victim's name, address, telephone number, gender, age and general condition; the best time to contact the person; and, if he or she knows the report is being made
- The alleged abuser's name, gender, age, relationship to victim and condition
- The circumstances which led the reporter to believe that the person is being abused, neglected or financially exploited, with as much specificity as possible
- Whether or not the alleged victim is in immediate danger and if there is any danger to the worker going out
- Whether or not the reporter believes the client could make a report himself or herself

- The name, telephone number and profession of the reporter
- The names of others with information about the situation
- If the reporter is willing to be contacted again, and
- Any other relevant information

* Even if the reporter does not have all of the above information, the call should be made with as much information as possible. Depending on the seriousness of the allegations, a trained caseworker will make a face-to-face contact with the victim within the following time frames:

- 24 hours for life threatening situations
- 72 hours for most neglect and non life-threatening physical abuse reports
- 7 calendar days for most financial exploitation and emotional abuse reports

* The Elder Abuse and Neglect Act provides extensive protections to all reporters. Anyone who makes an elder abuse report in good faith is exempt from civil or criminal liability. A reporter's name cannot be released without the reporter's consent or by order of a court. **Anonymous reports are also accepted.**

RESOURCES

Center for Prevention of Abuse Senior Services	(309) 637-3905
IL Department On Aging (IDOA) Senior HelpLine	1-800-252-8966
IDOA After-Hours Elder Abuse Hotline	1-866-800-1409
Central Illinois Agency on Aging	(309) 674-2071
Prairie State Legal Services (free legal assistance for seniors)	1-800-892-7888