

APS Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) are provided by County Departments of Social (Human) Services.

County APS Staff will:

- Receive and investigate reports of mistreatment and self-neglect of at-risk adults.
- Provide protective services to at-risk adults, such as:
 - casework services, referral to community service providers, arrangement of appropriate services, and assistance with applications for public benefits.
- Preserve APS priorities, which are:
 - Self Determination
An at-risk adult may refuse adult protective services.
 - Least Restrictive Intervention
An at-risk adult may expect that interventions will be provided in a manner that will cause minimal disruption to his/her life.
 - Confidentiality
The provision of services and interventions are kept confidential unless a court orders the release of records.
- Work with other community agencies in preventing mistreatment and self-neglect of at-risk adults.
- Increase public awareness of at-risk adult mistreatment and self-neglect through community outreach programs.

Contacts

To report mistreatment or abuse, call Adult Protective Services in the County Department of Social (Human) Services where the adult lives.

For more information, call:

**The Colorado Coalition for
Elder Rights and
Adult Protection**

303-866-2849

1-800-773-1366

**Colorado Aging & Adult
Services**

**Adult Protective Services 303-
866-2800 (voice or TTD)**

1-888-866-4243

Or visit:

www.ColoradoAging.com

www.CCERAP.org

Colorado Adult Protective Services

**Division of
Aging and Adult Services**

The purpose of the Adult Protective Services (APS) program is to protect adults who cannot protect themselves. These adults are known as "at-risk adults." They are considered to be "at-risk" of mistreatment or self-neglect because:

- They are unable to protect themselves;
- They are unable to perform or arrange for services that will help them protect their health and safety; and/or
- They lack sufficient understanding or lack the capacity to make or communicate decisions that keep them safe and healthy.

Mistreatment

Mistreatment of an at-risk adult includes physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, self-abuse, financial exploitation, and other forms of exploitation.

Physical Abuse* includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, burning, confining, or restraining an at-risk adult. Some signs of physical abuse are:

- Injuries, such as bruises, welts, burns, lacerations or abrasions, and fractures that are inconsistent with the explanation or are in various stages of healing
- Human bite marks and/or hair loss from pulling
- Signs of confinement such as rope-burns or bruising on wrists, ankles, neck or torso
- A history of repeated emergency room or hospital admissions
- Evidence of past injuries that have not properly healed

Neglect* is a lack of physical care, health care, or necessary medication, food, shelter, or clothing provided by a caregiver. Some signs of neglect by a caregiver are:

- Untreated medical conditions
- Improper administration of medications, other drugs, and/or alcohol to "control" the at-risk adult.
- Malnourishment and/or dehydration
- Poor hygiene and self-care
- Being left alone for long periods of time when the at-risk adult is in need of supervision and assistance

Sexual Abuse* is sexual activity or touching without consent or understanding. Some signs of sexual abuse are:

- Unexplained sexually transmitted disease
- Reported sexual assault
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- Bruises or bleeding of genital or anal areas or vaginal discharge
- Unexpected reluctance to cooperate with toileting and/or physical exam of the genitalia

Self-Abuse* is the infliction of injury to one's self. Some signs of self-abuse are:

- Head injuries from repeated head banging
- Bleeding, malformed fingertips from excessive finger biting or sucking
- Injuries to genitalia from insertion or rubbing of abrasive and/or sharp objects
- Hair loss from hair pulling
- Suicide attempts
- Self-inflicted cuts or skin tears

Financial Exploitation* is the use of an at-risk adult's money or property for another's benefit. Some signs of financial exploitation are:

- Unpaid monthly bills or bounced checks
- Income or assets used by another person without the adult's consent
- Questionable transfers of assets or property
- Denied access to personal funds or assets
- Abuse of power of attorney authority

Exploitation* of at-risk adults may not always involve financial issues. Some examples of other forms of exploitation are:

- Forcing a frail adult to panhandle
- Using the adult's home for the production, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs
- Prostituting an adult
- Obtaining credit in the adult's name or identity theft

* **Note:** Some signs, in isolation, may not indicate abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Self-Neglect

Self-Neglect* occurs when an at-risk adult cannot or does not care for him or herself. Choice of lifestyle, by itself, does not constitute self-neglect. Some signs of self-neglect are:

- Untreated medical conditions
- Non-compliance with or inability to take medicines as prescribed
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration
- Poor hygiene and self-care
- Bedsores
- Frequent falls
- Unsanitary condition in the home
- Wandering or getting lost
- History of fires or burns
- Confusion, disorientation, or memory impairment
- Inability to receive or communicate information regarding his/her needs

The Adult Protective Services (APS) statute does not authorize the APS program to investigate reports of emotional and verbal abuse.

Eligibility for APS

In order to be eligible for Adult Protective Services (APS), an adult (of any income level) must:

- Meet the statutory definition of an at-risk adult;
- Be the victim of mistreatment or self-neglect as defined by the statute; and
- Either consent to receive APS help or be determined by the court to be incapable of such consent.