

# adult protective services

providing help and hope to elder abuse victims



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Adults have the right to be safe.

Adults retain all their civil and constitutional rights unless some of these rights have been restricted by court action.

Adults have the right to make decisions that do not conform with societal norms, as long as they do not harm others.

Adults are presumed to have decision-making capacity unless a court adjudicates otherwise.

Adults with cognitive capacity have the right to accept or refuse services.

Adult who seem to lack cognitive capacity must be professionally evaluated; if the lack is confirmed, APS, working with the courts, takes steps to protect the person from harm.



National Adult Protective Services Resource Center

The National Adult Protective Services Resource Center (NAPSRC) is a project (Grant No. 90ER002/01) of the U.S. Administration on Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), administered by the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA). Grantees carrying out projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Therefore, points of view or opinions do not necessarily represent official Administration on Aging or DHHS policy.

APS professionals are the first responders to elder abuse and abuse of younger adults with disabilities. APS investigates reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation and intervenes to protect vulnerable adult victims.

## PURPOSE

To investigate reports of abuse, neglect, self-neglect and exploitation of older adults and, in most states, younger adults with disabilities.

To intervene to protect the victim to the extent possible.

## AUTHORIZATION

APS is statutorily authorized under each state's laws to receive and investigate reports of elder abuse and, in the majority of states, of abuse of younger adults with severe disabilities, and to protect the victims.

## WHAT DOES ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES DO?

Receives reports of alleged abuse, neglect, self-neglect or financial exploitation and determines if the client is eligible for help (i.e., do the allegations and the client's condition meet the state's statutory definitions).

Investigates the allegations through interviewing the client, collateral contacts, the alleged abuser and through examining evidence, including bank records.

Puts in place any necessary emergency interventions.

Makes a determination as to whether the abuse is occurring or not.

Develops a case plan, with the client, to stop the abuse, prevent further abuse, and address the client's health and safety needs.

Every APS Program investigates abuse in the home; about half investigate in long term care or other facilities.

**Note:** APS Programs can differ from state to state regarding the ages of clients served, the services offered and the definitions of abuse.