

# Elder Abuse: Prevention through Prosecution

Physical Abuse

Neglect

Psychological Abuse

Financial Abuse

Sexual Abuse



# Stop Elder ABUSE.

This Resource Guide was created in collaboration with WISE & Healthy Aging, and was funded by The County of Los Angeles Area Agency on Aging and The City of Los Angeles Department of Aging



# RECOGNIZE the SIGNS of ELDER ABUSE



**Help stop the abuse of elder and dependent adults by being aware of these signs.**

## **Physical Abuse**

- Unexplained signs of injury such as bruises, welts, scars, broken bones or sprains
- Report of drug overdose or apparent failure to take medication regularly
- Broken eyeglasses or frames
- Signs of being restrained, such as rope marks on wrists
- Caregiver's refusal to allow you to see the person alone
- Physical or chemical restraints for caregiver's convenience

## **Emotional Abuse**

- Threatening, belittling, or controlling caregiver behavior that you witness
- Behavior from the elder that mimics dementia, such as rocking, sucking, or mumbling

## **Sexual Abuse**

- Bruises around breasts or genitals
- Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections
- Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing

## **Neglect by Caregivers or Self-Neglect**

- Unusual weight loss, malnutrition, dehydration
- Untreated physical problems, such as bed sores
- Unsanitary living conditions: dirt, bugs, soiled bedding and clothes
- Dirty or unbathed
- Unsuitable clothing or covering for the weather
- Unsafe living conditions (no heat or running water; faulty electrical wiring, fire hazards)
- Desertion of the elder at a public place

## **Financial Exploitation**

- Significant or unauthorized withdrawals from the elder's accounts
- Sudden changes in the elder's financial condition
- Items or cash missing from the household
- Suspicious changes in wills, power of attorney, titles, and policies
- Addition of names to the elder's signature card
- Unpaid bills or lack of medical care, although the elder has enough money to pay for them
- Financial activity the elder couldn't have done, such as an ATM withdrawal by a bedridden account holder
- Unnecessary services, goods, or subscriptions

## **Healthcare Fraud and Abuse**

- Duplicate billings for the same medical service or device
- Evidence of overmedication or undermedication
- Evidence of inadequate care when bills are paid in full

## REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE

Dial **911** to report elder abuse or neglect to the **Police** NOW if the abuse is immediate and life-threatening.

**Elder Abuse Hotline** at **1-877-477-3646** or **1-800-992-1660** to report allegations of abuse when you are unsure on where to call.

**Adult Protective Services**, County of Los Angeles, **1-888-202-4248** if you suspect elder abuse in the community. Call 213-351-5401 if you are outside of Los Angeles County.

**Long-Term Care Ombudsman**, at WISE & Healthy Aging **1-800-334-9473** and report suspected abuse occurring at board and care homes, nursing homes and assisted living facilities in LA County. Statewide Ombudsman after hours crisis line: 1-800-231-4024.

## RESOURCES for SURVIVORS

- Los Angeles County District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance:  
<http://da.co.la.ca.us> 1-800-380-3811 or 1-626-927-2500
- Ageless Alliance <http://agelessalliance.org>  
(uniting against elder abuse through awareness, support and community engagement)

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### Domestic Violence

- National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233
- Domestic Violence Hotline Southern California 1-800-978-3600  
(callers may receive help in 13 languages)
- Jewish Family Service Family Violence Project 1-818-505-0900
- VINE- Victim Information and Notification Everyday  
(a service by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to notify you when the status of an inmate changes) 1-877-846-3452

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### Mental Health

- County of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health, Older Adult Services ACCESS Center  
Help regarding hoarding and other mental health issues: 1-800-854-7771
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

## RESOURCES to FIGHT ABUSE



### Mobile Apps: Available for Download on the Android and iPhone App Store

- 368+: Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Guide for CA Law Enforcement
- GEAR: A Guide for Elder Abuse (includes practical information on abuse, tools, resources, and ways to report abuse)

### General Information

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- City of Los Angeles Department of Aging and Information and Assistance: 1-213-252-4030
- County of Los Angeles Area Agency on Aging: 1-800-510-2020  
Department of Community and Senior Services: [www.css.lacounty.gov](http://www.css.lacounty.gov) 1-213-738-4004
- Los Angeles County Information and Referral, for senior services dial: 211  
[www.infoline-la.org](http://www.infoline-la.org)
- WISE & Healthy Aging Information & Referral for senior services: 1-310-394-9871 ext. 464

### Social Security Administration

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- [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) Fraud Hotline: 1-800-269-0271

### Legal Assistance

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- Bet Tzedek Legal Services: [www.bettzedek.org](http://www.bettzedek.org) 1-323-939-0506
- California State Attorney General: [www.oag.ca.gov](http://www.oag.ca.gov) 1-800-952-5225
- Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles: [www.lafla.org](http://www.lafla.org) 1-800-399-4529
- Los Angeles City Attorney's Office Elder Abuse Hotline: 1-877-477-3646
- Los Angeles County Bar Association Lawyer Referral & Information: [www.lacba.org](http://www.lacba.org) 1-213-243-1525
- Los Angeles County District Attorney Elder Abuse Section: 1-213-580-3383
- Los Angeles County Public Administrator – Public Guardian: 1-213-974-0515
- CANHR State Bar Certified Lawyer Referral Service: 1-800 474-1116

### Medicare or Medi-Cal Fraud

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- California Attorney General Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud & Elder Abuse: 1-800-722-0432  
On-line complaint form: [www.oag.ca.gov/bmfea](http://www.oag.ca.gov/bmfea)
- Center for Health Care Rights/California Health Advocates: [www.cahealthadvocates.org](http://www.cahealthadvocates.org)  
Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)  
Medicare and healthcare counseling: 1-800-434-0222
- Department of Health Services for Medi-Cal fraud 1-800-822-6222
- U.S. Health & Human Services TIPS Hotline to report Medicare fraud: 1-800-447-8477



## Financial Fraud and Exploitation

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### Credit Card Fraud

If you are a victim of identity theft, or you want to avoid becoming a victim of identity theft, call these agencies to freeze new accounts being opened in your name. Also for disputes regarding your credit record.

Experian: [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)

1-888-397-3742

Equifax: [www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com) 1-800-525-6285

TransUnion: [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

1-800-680-7289

Free Annual Credit Report – request a free credit report: [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)

1-877-322-8228

### Mail Fraud

U.S. Postal Inspection Service – report mail fraud: <http://postalinspectors.uspis.gov>

1-877-876-2455

Opt-out from unsolicited mail, pre-approved credit card and insurance offers:

1-888-567-8688

Direct Marketing Association Inc. – remove name from mailing & emailing list: [www.dmachoice.org](http://www.dmachoice.org)

### Telephone Fraud

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) – telemarketing fraud/identity theft:

1-877-382-4357

Do Not Call Registry – stop telemarketers from calling you: [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov)

1-888-382-1222

### Internet Crime / Spam

Internet Crime Complaint Center: [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov)

### Brokers/Investments Fraud

California Department of Corporations  
Seniors Against Investment Fraud (SAIF):  
1-866-275-2677

Concerns about brokers, investment advisers, financial planners, mortgage lenders and bill payers: [www.corp.ca.gov](http://www.corp.ca.gov)

Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) BrokerCheck – check the background of a broker or brokerage: 1-800-289-9999

### Consumer Issues

California Department of Consumer Affairs – check licenses for doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals: [www.dca.ca.gov](http://www.dca.ca.gov)  
1-800-952-5210

California Department of Insurance – insurance concerns: [www.insurance.ca.gov](http://www.insurance.ca.gov)  
1-800-927-4357

California Department of Real Estate – real estate concerns: [www.dre.ca.gov](http://www.dre.ca.gov)  
1-213-620-2072

California Public Utilities Commission – utility complaints: [www.cpuc.ca.gov/puc](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/puc)  
1-800-649-7570

Contractors State License Board – concerns regarding licensed and unlicensed contractors: [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov) 1-800-321-2752

Los Angeles County Department of Consumer Affairs – landlord/tenant issues, housing discrimination, homebuyer issues, consumer complaints: [www.dca.lacounty.gov](http://www.dca.lacounty.gov)  
1-800-593-8222 or 1-213-974-9778

## LOOKING out for **YOURSELF**



### **DO:**

- Stay active with your local senior center. It can be a valuable source of information.
- Plan for your care as you age. Identify reliable people who can provide assistance if needed.
- Review your finances regularly. Be extremely cautious when selecting “trustworthy” individuals to help manage your affairs when needed.
- Participate in community activities. Volunteering is a great way to have contact with others and make friends. Call WISE & Healthy Aging at 1-310-394-9871 for volunteer opportunities.

### **DON'T:**

- Don't put off preparing your future physical and financial needs.
- Don't accept personal care from anyone in exchange for property or assets without a lawyer or other trusted advocate to witness the transaction.
- Don't allow others to keep details of your finances from you.
- Don't give out personal or financial information to people you don't know, *especially over the phone*.
- Don't sign legal documents that you do not understand.

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WISE & Healthy Aging is a non-profit, social services organization recognized for its wide range of innovative support services designed to meet the needs of a diverse clientele within the greater Los Angeles area.

Our mission is to enhance the independence, dignity and quality of life of older adults through leadership, advocacy and innovative services.



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