



First Judicial District of Pennsylvania

Elder Justice Resource Center

Reporting Suspected Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Reporting can sometimes be a difficult decision. Someone might wonder if making a report is really the right thing to do, especially if they don't think they have enough information or if the elder is adamant that the authorities should not be involved. Some individuals and professionals may be mandated to report suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation.

To make a report of suspected elder abuse, you do not have to know everything about the situation. It is helpful to have the following information ready:

- Name, age and address of the potential victim
- Brief description of the situation
- Any evidence of previous maltreatment
- Explain how you know about the situation, your relationship to the elder
- Name and address of alleged perpetrator
- Location of the incident(s)
- Current injuries, medical problems, or behavioral problems
- Names of relatives or concerned parties in or outside the home
- Your name and contact information

To make a report:

- Call Philadelphia Corporation for the Aging (PCA) Helpline at 215-765-9040. Confidential calls to report abuse may be made by anyone, including the older adult in need. Investigators are available 24-hours-a-day at the Older Adult Protective Services Department.
- If the elder is in crisis or danger, call 911. Otherwise, make a report with local law enforcement.
- If the elder is living in a long term care facility, contact an Ombudsman:
 - In South, West, or North Philadelphia call Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly (CARIE) at 215-545-5728 or toll free at 1-800-356-3606.
 - In Northeast or Northwest Philadelphia call Center in the Park at 215-844-1829.

For more tips on dealing with difficulties of reporting, or to find out if you are a mandated reporter, visit www.aging.pa.gov.

(Adopted from the Minnesota Elder Justice Center)



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Preventing Common Scams against the Elderly

The same characteristics that make an elder person susceptible to familial exploitation, may also make them perfect targets for scammers. Whether by phone, mail, or face to face, scammers are not always strangers – building trust is a common tactic used to exploit elders. Watch out for these common scams and tactics:

Phishing: A scammer uses many tactics to try and get your personal information

Medical Scams: Relying on the confusion many have about insurance and medical coverage, scammers may “phish” for information or sell things you don’t need

Charity Scams: Bogus charities prey on the good-nature of others

Sweetheart Scam: A person convinces an elder that they are in a romantic relationship as a means to exploit

Wire-Transfer Scams: Fake lotteries and other scams often require seniors to wire money or purchase prepaid debit cards

Pushy Sales Tactics

Remember to S.T.O.P.

S: Systemize your Finances: Set up a system to make daily and weekly money management easier, and sift through the mountains of mail, phone, and other offers that bombard seniors.

T: Tell Someone: Have a “buddy” system in place and consult with someone you trust before making a large purchase or investment. Don’t be pressured or intimidated into immediate decisions.

O: Obtain the Documents: If you hire someone for any type of services job – from personal care attendant to home contractor work – ensure that they have been properly screened and licensed. Don’t sign any documents that you don’t completely understand without first consulting an attorney, family member, or close friend that you trust.

P: Practice saying NO: Hang up the phone! If you are offered a “prize”, “loan”, “investment” that sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Do not provide personal information over the phone unless **you** initiated the call and **you know** with whom you are speaking.