

## Tips for Protecting Your Money

- u Use direct deposit for your checks.
- u Don't sign blank checks and allow another person to fill in the amount.
- u Don't leave money or valuables in plain view.
- u Don't sign anything you don't understand.
- u Protect your money. The bank may be able to protect your money by arranging your accounts to control access to your funds.
- u Be aware of scams. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- u Cancel your ATM card if you don't use it.
- u Don't give anyone your ATM/PIN number.
- u Check your bank statements carefully for unauthorized transactions.
- u Be cautious of joint accounts.
- u Build good relationships with the professionals who handle your money.

To report  
elder financial abuse,  
call the  
Elder Abuse Hotline:

**1-800  
752-6200**

This brochure is provided by:

**Attention  
Seniors:  
Protect  
Your  
Money**  
It's Your Future

# What Is Financial Exploitation?

Financial exploitation is the illegal or improper use of another person's resources for the perpetrator's profit or gain. Also called fiduciary abuse, economic abuse, and financial mistreatment, this type of exploitation includes a broad range of conduct, from stealing possessions to forging checks.

## Get Help

Financial matters can be confusing. If you have questions or need assistance, ask for help from your bank, church, a trusted family member, social worker, or other professional.

## Report It!

If you see or suspect financial exploitation, you must report it. It's the law. Call the abuse hotline:

**1-800-752-6200**

# Protect Yourself From Financial Exploitation

## Stay Socially Active

Social isolation increases your risk of becoming a victim of abuse. Become familiar with the programs in your community designed to bring people together and to help older people and their families.

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## Get to Know Your Banker, Attorney, and Financial Consultant

Establish relationships with the professionals who handle your money. They can detect changes in your financial activity that may signal a problem.

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## Include a Compensation Clause in Any Power of Attorney

Before you assign a power of attorney, be sure you understand the scope of the agreement and the authority you are giving to your agent. Know the person to whom you are giving this authority. Also, specify the compensation, if any, to be paid to your agent.

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## Be Cautious of Joint Accounts

Both parties are equal owners of the account, and both have equal access to the account's assets.

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## Document Financial Arrangements

By putting financial arrangements in writing, you not only protect yourself, you also reduce the likelihood of future misunderstandings. Put all financial instructions in writing and be specific. Keep complete financial records of all transactions. Put all financial documents in a safe place.

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## Don't Give Away Property

Before you enter into an agreement for lifelong care, discuss the arrangements with a trusted friend or advisor. Document the agreement and specify the compensation, if there is any, to be paid to the caregiver. If there is someone helping you with your personal finances, get a trusted third party to review your bank statements.