



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

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**Cabinet for Health and Family Services Recognizes World Elder Abuse
Awareness Day**

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 15, 2017) – In recognition of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) on June 15, the Kentucky Adult Protective Services (APS) Branch reminds Kentuckians to help guard against elder abuse.

APS, within the Department for Community Based Services in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), is the state agency responsible for investigating and providing protective services to individuals that are reported to be the alleged victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

APS provides administrative support for the state's network of 24 Local Coordinating Councils on Elder Abuse (LCCEAs), which covers 93 counties. The councils provide focused education to their communities to protect the elder population from abuse, neglect and financial exploitation.

The LCCEAs do education and outreach work at the local and regional levels depending on the needs of the communities. Kentucky's network involves local law enforcement, county officials, advocates, nursing homes, local businesses, social service agencies and individuals. They share a common goal of ending abuse, neglect and exploitation of the elderly in their communities by offering specific advocacy, outreach and prevention strategies.

Recognize the Signs of Elder Abuse

If you believe an elderly person is being abused, neglected or exploited, call 1-877-KYSAFE1 (1-877-597-2331), the state's abuse hotline. If you believe there is imminent risk, immediately call 911 or local law enforcement.

Learn to recognize the following signs of neglect and abuse.

Neglect

- Obvious malnutrition, dehydration
- Dirty and uncombed hair; dirty and torn or climate-inappropriate clothes; or offensive body odor
- Hoarding
- Lack of glasses, dentures or hearing aid, or lack of medical care
- Bedsores

- Recent suffering or loss of spouse, family members or close friends

Physical Abuse

- Frequent injuries such as bruises, burns, broken bones; explanation of the injury seems unrealistic
- Multiple bruises in various stages of healing, particularly bruises on inner arms or thighs
- Experiences pain when touched
- Loss of bowel and bladder control
- Never leaves the house or allows visitors
- Never mentions family or friends

Sexual Abuse

- Evidence of sexually transmitted disease
- Irritation or injuries to the mouth, genitals or anus
- Upset when changed or bathed
- Fearful of a particular person
- Loss of bowel and bladder control

Emotional/Psychological Abuse

- Isolated from family and friends
- Sudden dramatic change in behavior, appearing withdrawn, depressed, hesitant to talk openly
- Caregiver won't let victim speak for herself or himself
- Caregiver scolds, insults, threatens victim
- Trembling, clinging

Financial Abuse

- Unusual activity in bank account; sudden large withdrawals, expenditures that are not consistent with past financial history
- Use of automated teller machines (ATM) when the person has no history of using ATMs or cannot walk
- A recent will, when the person seems incapable of writing a will
- Rights signed away on legal papers without understanding what the papers mean
- Unpaid bills, such as house payment, rent, taxes or utilities

Kentucky received more than 30,000 calls to report abuse, neglect and exploitation of people age 60 and older for state fiscal year 2016.

In Kentucky, reporting suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation is the law, and it's confidential. The toll-free reporting hotline is 1-877-KYSAFE1 (1-877-597-2331). Get more information about the councils and recognizing the signs of elder abuse online at chfs.ky.gov/dcbs/dpp/ea/.

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services, the Department for Public Health, and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.