

# Adult Protective Services: Mandated Reporter Training



COUNTY OF SONOMA  
**Human Services  
Department**

## Sonoma County Adult & Aging

# Learning Objectives



Identify APS target populations

Describe the Principles of Adult Protection and the APS Legal Mandate

Describe types of reportable abuse/neglect

Recognize signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect

Define “mandated reporter”

Describe the process for reporting abuse and neglect

# Our Mission



Human Services Department  
COUNTY OF SONOMA



**The Sonoma County Human Services Department strives to support the health, safety and well-being of individuals, families and the community.**



**Adult & Aging helps ensure the safety, independence and well-being of older adults, persons with disabilities, and military veterans and their families.**

# APS serves Sonoma County Residents who are:



## Dependent Adults

**Age 18– 59** with physical or mental limitations that restrict ability to carry out normal activities or protect rights, and not living in a licensed facilities.



## Vulnerable Elders

**Elder** age 60 years and older



# For Mandated Reporters of APS



- Mandated reporters are required by law (WIC 15630) to report any suspicion of abuse involving dependent adults ages 18-64 and elder adults age 65+.
- While not required to do so, mandated reporters may report cases of abuse in 60-64 population for elders.

# Who to Call 24/7:

Health.  
Safety.  
Independence.



**To Report** someone in the community, a private residence or hospital

**Call** Adult Protective Services at **(707) 565-5940** or **(800) 667-0404**

[www.sonomacounty.ca.gov/Human-Services/Adult-and-Aging/Adult-Protective-Services/](http://www.sonomacounty.ca.gov/Human-Services/Adult-and-Aging/Adult-Protective-Services/)

**To Report** someone living in a board and care or skilled nursing home

**Call** the Ombudsman at **(707) 526-4108**, **(800) 231-4024**

<https://senioradvocacyservices.org/>

**To Report** a Residential Care Facility for the Elderly, developmentally disabled and mentally ill, as well as adult day programs.

**Call** Community Care Licensing **(707) 588-5026**

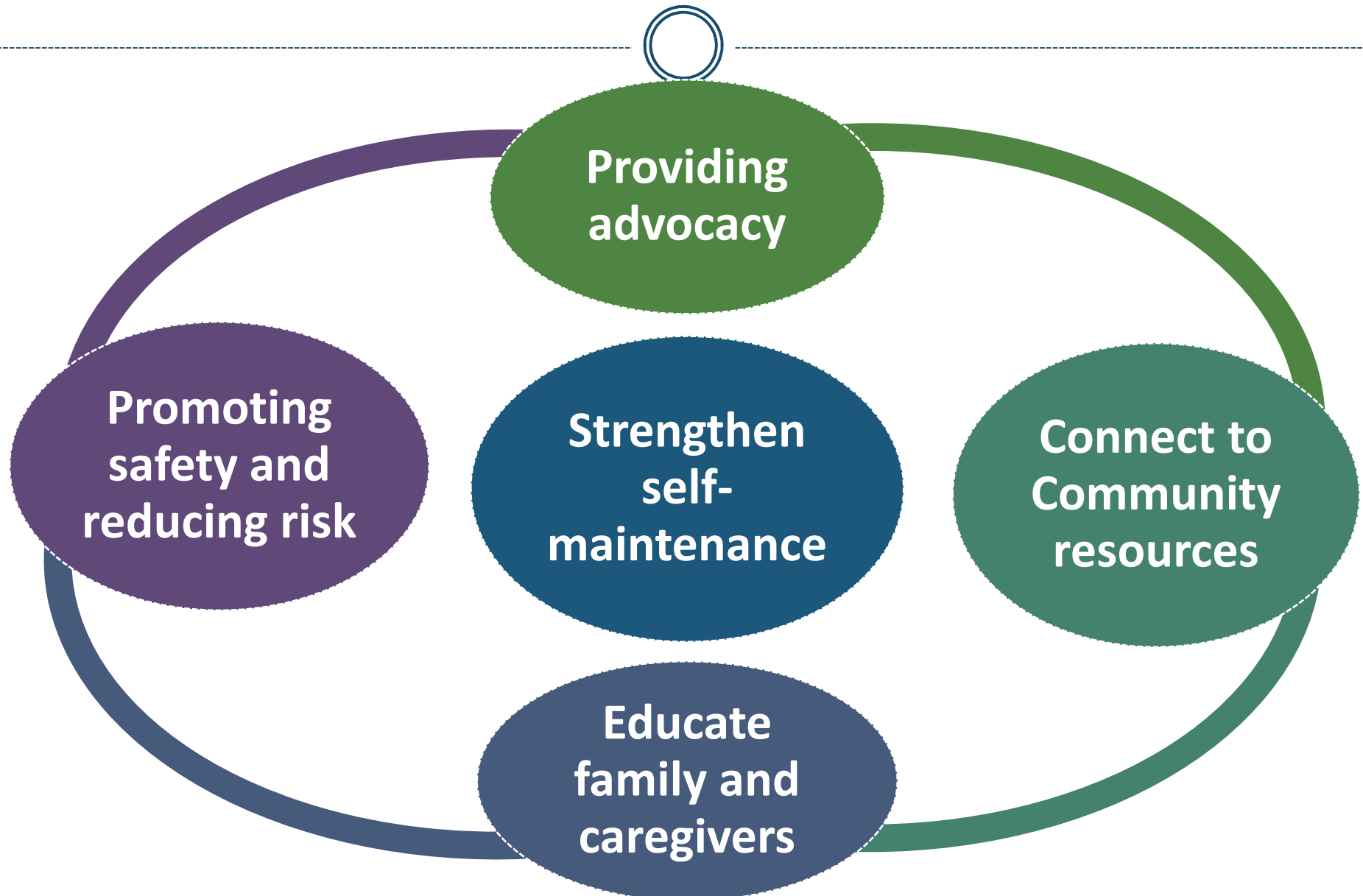
<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/CCLD-Complaint-Hotline>

# Role of Adult Protective Services



- Is a state-mandated agency to receive and investigate reports of elder or dependent adult abuse and neglect.
- Connects elders or dependent adults with services.
- Provides crisis intervention – assesses danger and develops service plan to reduce danger.
- Investigations usually conclude within 30 days
- Offer short term follow up services
- Investigations are mandatory; services are voluntary.

# Goals of Adult Protective Services





# Principles of Adult Protection

## Adults have the right to:

- Be safe.
- **Retain all their** civil and constitutional **rights** (unless restricted by court).
- **Make decisions** that do not conform with social norms (as long as these decisions do not harm others).
- **Refuse or accept services.**
- All adults are presumed to have **decision-making capacity.**



## How Does Capacity Impact APS?

- Impaired decision-making (cognitive decline) is linked to increased risk for abuse and exploitation.
  - Almost 33% of older adults age 65+ have some level of cognitive impairment & about 1 out of 10 have dementia
- Victim autonomy and self-determination are respected
- Interventions which enhance safety can be developed and thoughtfully and ethically implemented



# What can APS Do ?



- Evaluate each report
- Assign a Social Worker to investigate
- Refer to a APS PHN (Public Health Nurse)
- Refer to Law Enforcement
- Conducts a risk assessment
- Develop a service plan
- Short term case management to stabilize the situation
- Provide information and referral

# Types of Reportable Abuse



**NEGLECT: SELF OR BY ANOTHER**

**FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION**

**PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE**  
INCLUDING ABDUCTION & ABANDONMENT

**PSYCHOLOGICAL/MENTAL SUFFERING**  
INCLUDING ISOLATION



# Changes in Appearance, Demeanor and Lifestyle



- Diminishing quality of life-utilities shut off.
- Signs of Inadequate clothing, food - running out of food and medicine
- changes in appearance, weight and health.
- Vulnerable adult has a companion who seems to be making all the decisions.
- Changes in ability to follow a conversation
- Asking repeated questions
- Memory Deficits
- Can't find words to express thoughts
- Maybe experiencing anxiety and depression as a result of financial abuse



# Self - Neglect

**Definition:** When a vulnerable adult is failing to provide for their own health and safety.

**Fact:** Over half of APS reports involve self-neglect.



## Symptoms of Self–Neglect:

- Weight loss
- Strong odors
- Dehydration
- Soiled clothing/bedding



## Neglect by Other

### Definition:

Failure to fulfill any part of a Care Custodian's obligations or duties to an elder



Failure to assist in personal hygiene

Failure to provide clothing and shelter

Failure to provide medical care

Failure to protect from health and safety hazards

Failure to prevent malnutrition/dehydration

# Financial Abuse

The illegal or improper use of an elder or dependent adult's funds, property, or assets including:



- **Theft: debit card and checks**
- **Identity theft**
- **Predatory lending**
- **Scams:**
  - Home Improvement
  - Estate Planning
  - Sweepstake/Lottery Scams
  - Embezzlement or manipulation



# Changes in Spending and Transaction Patterns



- Missing property
- Someone else managing finances and assets
- Changes to financial documents (deeds/trusts)
- Change in spending habits
- Unpaid bills, eviction notices, or discontinued utilities.

- Unusual account activity from prior inactive account.
- Flurry of bounced checks and overdraft fees.
- Increase in Credit Card charges and ATM withdrawals.

# Physical Abuse

Includes: Assault, Sexual Abuse & Medical

## Symptoms

- Injuries inconsistent with explanations
- Unexplained cuts, burns, bruises
- Unusually withdrawn or fearful demeanor

## Signs

- Inappropriate use of medication
- Unreasonable physical constraint or chemical restraint
- Non-consensual sex of any kind
- Inflicting or threatening to inflict physical pain or injury
- Prolonged or continual deprivation of food or water



# Abduction - Abandonment - Isolation



## Abduction

- Removal from this state and/or the restraint from returning of any elder or dependent adult who does not have the capacity to consent.

## Abandonment

- Desertion or willful forsaking of an elder or a dependent adult by anyone who has care or custody.

## Isolation

- Prevention from receiving phone calls or mail, false imprisonment or physical restraint from meeting with visitors.

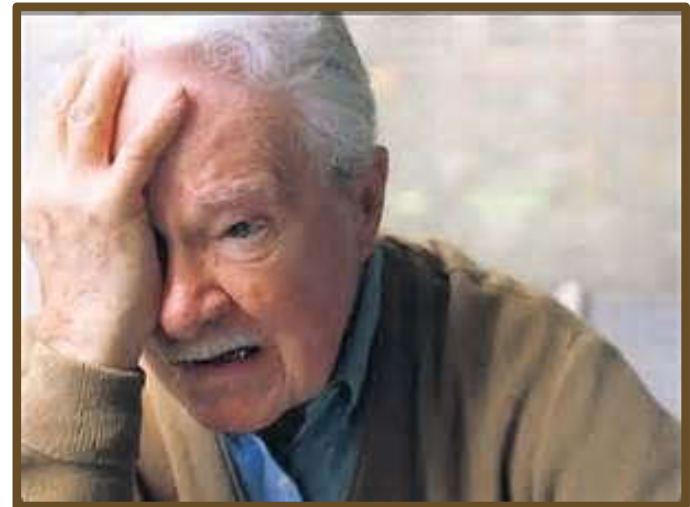
# Psychological Abuse and Mental Suffering

Includes: Threats, Harassment, Intimidation



## Signs and Symptoms

- Fear
- Agitation
- Confusion
- Depression, withdrawal, emotional distress



**\* Psychological abuse is often co-occurring and a sign of other types of abuse**

# Red Flags



**Dependency on others**

**Isolation**

**Cognitive impairments**

## **Did you know?**

- 80% of abusers are in a trusting relationship with the vulnerable adult.*
- Signs of abuse may be missed or mistaken for “usual aging.”*

# Victim Vulnerability



Reluctant to admit abuse due to: shame, embarrassment, fear of losing independence or being moved.

May be too incapacitated to report.

Refers to a caregiver's "anger or temper"

May have accidental injuries and/or avoid seeking medical attention for injuries until days/weeks after.

# Alleged abusers may be:



Individuals with a history of mental illness or substance abuse

Emotionally or financially dependent upon elder.

Have a poor employment history.

New friend or romantic interest.

# Alleged Abuser's Behavior



Express excessive concerns about costs

Attempts to dominate vulnerable adult

Restrict others from seeing or talking to them alone.

Controlling behavior and verbally abusive



## Evaluate & Screen Report

60+, Dependent Adult

Clearly Identified Protective Issue

## Assignment & Investigation

Social Worker/PHN

10 Day Face to Face Interview

Non 10 day Interview

## Risk Assessment

Bio-psychosocial Review

## Referrals as Needed

Financial Team

Public Health Nurse

Law Enforcement

## Service Plan

Case management

Services

information & referrals

## Closure

30 days

# Who are Mandated Reporters?



**Any Person who has assumed full or intermittent responsibility for care or custody of an elder or dependent adult.**


**\*W&I Code 15630**



# Mandated Reporters are:



- Health Practitioners, Clergy and County Welfare Departments
- Employees of Law Enforcement Agencies, Fire Departments and Animal Control agencies
- Employees of Environmental Health and Building Code Enforcement
- Employees of Financial Institutions, Brokers and Investment Advisers (SB 496)
- Any protective, public, sectarian, mental health, private assistance, or advocacy agency, or person providing health services or social services to elders or dependent adults



## What does the law require?

A Mandated Reporter **must make a report** whenever, in his/her professional capacity/scope of employment, the following occurs:

1. A reporter observes or has knowledge of an incident that **reasonably appears to be abuse.**
2. A reporter is **told of an incident** by the victim.
3. A reporter **reasonably suspects** abuse.

# Safeguards / Dangers of Not Reporting



## Safeguards for Reporters

- All reports made by mandated reporters are confidential

## If you don't report...

- Punishable by imprisonment and fined
- Up to 1 year in jail
- Up to \$5000.00 fine if results in great bodily harm or death
- An elder/dependent adult may continue to be abused or neglected

# How Do I Report?

## Step 1: Call ASAP

### Make a verbal report to:

- Adult and Aging Hotline:  
1 (800) 667-0404
- Reports are taken 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

## Step 2: Write

### Submit written within 48 hrs:

- Forms and instructions also available online: form SOC 341 can be obtained online at: [cdss.ca.gov](http://cdss.ca.gov)
- Fax or mail forms to Adult Protective Services

# State of California (SOC 341)



Reporting Form

Link to Reporting Form

State of California – Health and Human Services Agency California Department of Social Services

## REPORT OF SUSPECTED DEPENDENT ADULT/ELDER ABUSE

Date Completed

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT - NOT SUBJECT TO PUBLIC DISCLOSURE  
TO BE COMPLETED BY REPORTING PARTY. PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE.  
SEE GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS.

A. VICTIM  Check box if victim consents to disclosure of information  
(Ombudsman use only - WIC 15636(a))

Name (Last Name, First Name) Age Date of Birth SSN

Gender Identity  Male  Female  Transgender  Other/Nonbinary  Unknown/Not Provided  
Sexual Orientation  Straight  Gay/Lesbian  Bisexual  Questioning  Unknown/Not Provided  
Ethnicity Race  
Language (Check one)  Non-Verbal  English  Other (Specify)

Address (If facility, include name and notify ombudsman) City Zip Code Telephone

Present Location (If different from above) City Zip Code Telephone

Elderly (60+)  Developmentally Disabled  Mentally Ill/Disabled  Physically Disabled  Unknown/Other  Lives Alone  Lives with Others

B. SUSPECTED ABUSER Check if  Self-Neglect

Name of Suspected Abuser

Address City Zip Code Telephone

Care Custodian (Type)  Parent  Son/Daughter  Other  
 Health Practitioner (Type)  Spouse  Other Relation

Gender  Male  Female Ethnicity Age D.O.B

Height Weight Eyes Hair

- [SOC 341 \(8/22\) \(ca.gov\)](https://www.ca.gov)



# On-line Reporting



If making an on-line report, please call and leave your name and name of victim stating you have made an on-line report.

## On-Line Website:

<https://sonoma.leapsportal.net/Intake/NewPublicIntakeReport.aspx>

For Information and Resources



Please call

707-565- INFO(4636)

# Remember ...



- You may be the first to notice “**Red Flags**” and the only one who knows how to help by reporting.
- You simply need to **report suspicions**.
- Your report is **confidential**.
- You do not need to act as an investigator.
- Law Enforcement or Adult Protective Services will investigate and determine if there is actual abuse or neglect taking place.