

What happens after a report of abuse?

DHS and local aging and disability offices provide protective services and investigate reports of suspected abuse. These agencies will determine whether or not abuse or neglect occurred and work with law enforcement when a potential crime may have occurred.

Will my name be kept confidential if I report abuse?



State law protects the confidentiality of all individuals reporting abuse. The identity of the reporter can only be revealed under specific legal exceptions

such as reporting of a crime or an order by a judge. You are not required to give your name if you wish to remain anonymous.

For more information or to report abuse

To find your local office, go to the government pages of your telephone book and look under County Services for Seniors, Disability, Aging, or Human Services, or go to www.oregon.gov/DHS/spwpd/

or contact the

Oregon Department of Human Services Seniors and People with Disabilities

500 Summer Street, NE E-10
Salem, Oregon 97301
Fax: 503-947-4245
TTY: 711

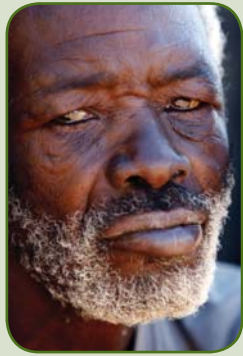
Am I protected if I report abuse?

Yes. Oregon's adult abuse reporting law affords protection for any individual who reports suspected abuse in good faith. Anyone reporting adult abuse with reasonable grounds is immune from civil liability.

Adult Abuse Reporting



This document can be provided upon request in alternative formats for individuals with disabilities. Other formats may include (but are not limited to) large print, Braille, audio recordings, Web-based communications and other electronic formats. E-mail valerie.m.eames@state.or.us, call 503-945-5884 (voice) or fax 503-947-4245, or TTY 711 to arrange for the alternative format that will work best for you.



Abuse robs older adults and persons with physical disabilities of health, safety and property in communities across Oregon.

Let's commit to the improvement of vulnerable adults' quality of life through prevention and reporting.

What is adult abuse?

Abuse of older adults aged 65 and older and adults with physical disabilities under the age of 65 can include:

- Physical harm or injury;
- Failure to provide basic care;
- Financial exploitation;
- Verbal/emotional abuse;
- Involuntary seclusion;
- Wrongful restraint;
- Unwanted sexual contact; or
- Abandonment by the caregiver.

In addition, self-neglect is where individuals lack the cognitive ability to care for themselves, which can also lead to harm.

Where does adult abuse occur?

Abuse can happen wherever someone lives, such as a person's own home or the home of family or friends. It can also occur in a professional care setting such as a nursing facility, a residential care facility, an assisted living facility, an adult foster home, a retirement home or a room-and-board home.

How big a problem is adult abuse?

Each year, the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), local offices of Seniors and People with Disabilities (SPD) and Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) receive more than 20,000 calls of concern and investigate more than 12,000 complaints of adult abuse and self-neglect.

As baby boomers age, the problem will worsen. In 2010, 13 percent of Oregon's population was 65 or older. In 2030, 20 percent will be 65 or older.



Who should report abuse?

Everyone should report abuse. We all have a responsibility to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Oregon law requires mandatory reporting by certain people.

Who is a mandatory reporter?

You are a mandatory reporter for older adults if you are a:

- Naturopathic, osteopathic, podiatric, chiropractic or general physician or surgeon (including an intern or resident);
- Licensed practical nurse, registered nurse, nurse's aide, home health aide or employee of an in-home health service;
- Employee of DHS or OHA, county health department, community mental health, developmental disabilities program or an area agency on aging (AAA);

- Peace officer;
- Member of the clergy;
- Psychologist, licensed clinical social worker, licensed professional counselor, licensed clinical social worker or licensed marriage and family therapist;
- Physical therapist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, audiologist or speech language pathologist;
- Information and referral or outreach worker;
- Senior center employee;
- Firefighter or emergency medical technician;
- Adult foster home licensee or an employee of the licensee; or
- Any public official that comes in contact with older adults in the performance of the official's duties.

Note: All of the above plus legal counsel, guardians and family members are mandatory reporters for any resident in a nursing facility.



Together, we have the power to prevent abuse.