

Adult Protective Services

Mission Statement

Our mission is to protect Vulnerable Adults from abuse, neglect, self-neglect, abandonment and abandonment and exploitation. We value client self-determination and the professional and exploitation expertise of our APS colleagues, while working to prevent and end harm by:

- ❖ *Conducting objective, timely, and thorough investigation;*
- ❖ *Assisting Vulnerable Adults to access appropriate services in accordance with statute, rules, policy, and client consent;*
- ❖ *Networking and coordinating with others to serve vulnerable Adults; and*
- ❖ *Educating Vulnerable Adults and the community about abuse, neglect, self-neglect, abandonment, exploitation, and protective services.*

What is APS?

Aging and Disabilities Services Administration administers the APS program. It is part of the Home and Community Services Division.

Legislative Authority
RCW 74.34 provides authority for APS investigations and provision of protective services.

History

APS was developed in 1984 when the Washington State Legislature passed the Abuse of Vulnerable Adults law, RCW 74.34. At that time, vulnerable adults were defined as adults 60 years of age or older who had the functional, mental or physical inability to care for themselves. Between 1995 and 1999 the number of APS investigations increased by 100%.

In the year 2000, APS created specialized investigative units throughout the State of Washington. These units are staffed by social workers and supervisors who receive specialized investigative training.

What do we do?

APS investigates allegations of abandonment, abuse (physical, sexual, mental), financial exploitation, neglect, and self-neglect of vulnerable adults.

A **vulnerable adult** is anyone:

- 60 years of age or older without the functional, physical, or mental ability to care for themselves;

- over age 18 with a developmental disability;
- over age 18 with a legal guardian; living in their own home or receiving care from a home care agency,
- individual provider, or self-directing their own care;
- living in an adult family home, boarding home, or nursing home when the alleged perpetrator is not affiliated with the licensed setting (such as a family member of the victim).

What Allegations do we investigate?

Abuse means the willful action or inaction that causes harm. It includes physical, mental and sexual abuse.

Abandonment leaves the vulnerable person without the means or ability to self-care.

Exploitation is pressuring or manipulating a vulnerable adult to act differently than they have in the past or to perform services benefiting others. Exploitation of a vulnerable adult may be financial or personal.

Neglect is the failure to maintain the health and safety of a vulnerable adult.

Self-neglect is the failure of a vulnerable adult, not living in a facility, to meet self-care needs that threaten or impair the ability to remain safe.

What Procedures do we use?

- APS receives, screens and assigns reports Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. based on the severity of the allegation.
- APS immediately refers to law enforcement any reports that are criminal in nature. APS coordinates with local law enforcement agencies when appropriate.
- APS reports are assigned for investigation based on the severity and immediacy of actual or potential harm.
- APS investigators conduct a face-to-face interview with the APS client.
- Investigators gather information that is pertinent to the allegation by interviewing collateral contacts, reviewing documents and using other investigative procedures as warranted.
- Investigations are conducted without regard to the income or resources of the vulnerable adult.

What services can APS provide?

APS can offer the victim the following services with her consent.

Many services can help a person stay in her **own home**:

- ✓ **Activities of Daily Living** (personal hygiene, toileting, bathing, dressing, cooking and eating)
- ✓ **Taking care of the house** (essential shopping, laundry, and housework)
- ✓ **Some medical services** (home health care, care for the terminally ill, help with medications, and transportation to medical appointments)

daily living, and personal care tasks.

✓ **Boarding Homes** –

licensed apartment style living that provide room, board, laundry, supervision, activities of daily living, medication assistance, activities, and limited nursing services, depending on the type of contract and license the facility has.

- ✓ **Nursing Facilities** – licensed care facilities that provide 24-hour nursing care, personal care, therapy, supervised nutrition, activities, social services, room, board, and laundry services.

decisions, and making other personal decisions.

The guardian **cannot** move a person against her will; force her to take medication; or to get medical treatment.

What can the community do?

If you think that someone may be in danger or needs immediate medical attention, call 911 or your local law enforcement immediately. Adult Protective Service does coordinate with law enforcement when there is a suspected crime.

When you report, you will be asked:

- The name, address, apartment number, age and telephone number of the adult that you think is being harmed.
- Any information about the circumstances of the allegations of abuse, neglect exploitation or abandonment.
- The name, address, relationship and the telephone number of the person you think is causing the harm.
- Names of other people who can provide information about the situation.

How can we work together?

Keeping the vulnerable adults safe is the responsibility of all citizens. Here's some things that really helps:

- Check-in with people that are home-bound.
- If you see a person making drastic changes in their appearance or health, let someone know.
- Behavioral changes are clues that the vulnerable adults need help.
- Keep trying, don't give up! If a vulnerable adult doesn't want help at some point, keep in touch, sometimes they change their minds.
- If there are sudden withdrawals of monies or disposal of property, be suspicious.
- Get to know the vulnerable people in your community!

Other Services – Referrals and Assistance:

- *Protection Orders*
- *Respite care*
- *Age 60 and over--Senior Centers, Congregate or Home-delivered meals, and legal services*
- *In most communities -- adult day health care, hospice, transportation, and support groups*

Residential Services

- ✓ **Adult Family Homes** – licensed homes that provide room, board, laundry, supervision, activities of

Where to Call:

**Adult Protective Services
for Region #2
1-866-221-4909
Snohomish, Island, Skagit,
Whatcom & San Juan**