

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU REPORT?



The APS agency screens calls for potential seriousness. The agency keeps the information it receives confidential. If the agency decides the situation

possibly violates state elder abuse laws, the agency assigns a caseworker to conduct an investigation (in cases of an emergency, usually within 24 hours). If the victim needs crisis intervention, services are available. If elder abuse is not substantiated, most APS agencies will work as necessary with other community agencies to obtain any social and health services that the older person needs.

The older person has the right to refuse services offered by APS. The APS agency provides services only if the older person agrees or has been declared incapacitated by the court and a guardian has been appointed. The APS agency only takes such action as a last resort.



Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia
1226 Whitemarsh Road
Suffolk, Virginia 23434
Phone: 925-1449

Senior Services is the Area Agency on Aging, a nonprofit agency dedicated to helping seniors and their caregivers find the information and services they need to lead healthy, independent lives.



Services provided:

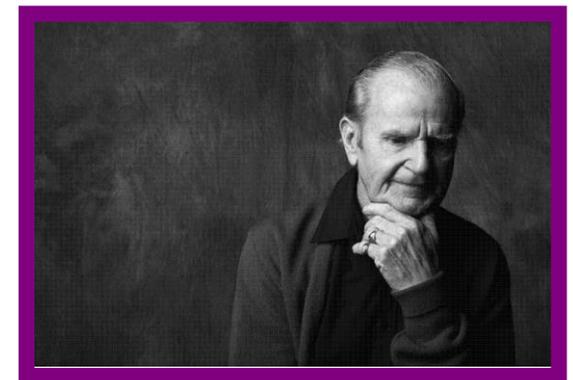
- Care Coordination/Case Management
- Homemaker Companions
- Homebound Meals
- Medical Transportation
- Legal Services (limited)
- Employment Program
- Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)



"We all have the right to be free from abuse and neglect. If an elderly person you know is being victimized, it is important for you to take action to stop it. Without intervention, abuse almost always escalates. Because victims are often reluctant to report, an elderly person's well-being may depend on you to recognize and report suspected abuse. Together, we can be a lifeline."

C. Phillips "Phil" Ferguson,
Your Commonwealth's Attorney

Elder Abuse Prevention



Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney
Godwin Courts Building
150 North Main Street
Suffolk, Virginia 23434-4552

Visit our Websites:

www.suffolk.va.us/cwatty/
www.suffolk.va.us/cwatty/vwsp/

757/514-4365

ELDER ABUSE IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM



No one knows precisely how many older Americans are being abused, neglected, or exploited. While evidence accumulated to date suggests that many thousands have been harmed, there are no official national statistics. There are several reasons:

- Definitions of elder abuse vary. It is difficult to pinpoint exactly what actions or inactions constitute abuse, and the problem remains greatly hidden.
- State statistics vary widely as there is no uniform reporting system.
- Comprehensive national data are not collected.

Legislatures in all 50 states have passed some form of elder abuse prevention laws. Laws and definitions of terms vary considerably from one state to another, but all states have set up reporting systems. You can contact Adult Protective Services (APS) locally at **514-7458** to investigate reports of suspected elder abuse.



WHAT DO THE STUDIES SAY?

- According to the best available annual estimates, between 2 and 5 million Americans age 65 or older have been injured, exploited, or otherwise mistreated by someone on whom they depended for care or protection.
- Data on elder abuse in domestic settings suggest that 1 in 14 incidents, *excluding* incidents of self-neglect, come to the attention of authorities.
- Current estimates put the overall reporting of financial exploitation at only 1 in 25 cases, suggesting that there may be at least 5 million financial abuse victims each year.
- It is estimated that for every one case of elder abuse, neglect, exploitation, or self-neglect reported to authorities, about five more go unreported.
- Among known perpetrators of abuse and neglect, the perpetrator was a family member in 90 percent of cases. Two-thirds of the perpetrators were adult children or spouses.



PHYSICAL ABUSE is the willful infliction of physical pain or injury, for



example: slapping, punching, bruising, or restraining.

SEXUAL ABUSE is the infliction of non-consensual sexual contact of any kind.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE is the infliction of mental or emotional anguish (humiliating, intimidating, or threatening).

FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL EXPLOITATION is the improper act or process of an individual, using the resources of an older person, without his/her consent, for someone else's benefit.

NEGLECT is the failure of a caretaker to provide goods or services necessary to avoid physical harm, mental anguish or mental illness, including abandonment, denial of food or health related services.

WHAT IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE?



If you, as a concerned citizen or service provider, suspect that abuse has occurred or is occurring, report your suspicions to the local **Adult Protective Services Agency (Suffolk – 514-7458)**. If the suspected

incident involves an older person living in an institutional setting, call the **State Long-Term Care Ombudsman at 804/565-1600**.