

Abuse Must Be Reported

Any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a vulnerable adult is being or has been abused, neglected, exploited, abandoned, intimidated or is committing self-neglect, shall report the information immediately to the Department of Family Services or a law enforcement agency, such as the police, sheriff's department, highway patrol, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, or Department of Criminal Investigation. Anyone, who in good faith makes a report, is immune from civil liability for making the report.

To Report Elder Abuse:

- Wyoming Department of Family Services: (307) 777-7921
- Local law enforcement non-emergency line
- Emergency: 911

Learn more about the Program online:

<https://health.wyo.gov/admin/long-term-care-ombudsman-program/>

Or Call **(800) 856-4398**

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Regional Ombudsman

Dawn Marie Thacker

Email: dawn.thacker@wyo.gov

Lead Regional Ombudsman

Counties: Big Horn, Washakie, Park, Hot Springs, Fremont, Sublette, Lincoln, Teton

Phone: (307) 856-6880 or (800) 856-4398

Erica Eastlund

Email: erica.eastlund1@wyo.gov

Regional Ombudsman

Counties: Sheridan, Johnson, Campbell, Crook, Weston, Natrona, Converse

Phone: (307) 235-5959 or (877) 634-1006

Don Runyon

Email: don.runyon1@wyo.gov

Regional Ombudsman

Counties: Laramie, Goshen, Niobrara, Platte, Albany, Carbon, Sweetwater, Uinta

Phone: (307) 634-1010 or (877) 634-1005

State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Patricia Hall

Email: patricia.hall1@wyo.gov

Phone: (307) 777-2885

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Wyoming
Department
of Health



Elder Abuse Prevention Guide

Know the signs and what you can do!

What Is Elder Abuse?

Abuse means the intentional or reckless infliction, by the vulnerable adult's caregiver, a person of trust or authority, professional, family member or other individual of: injury, unreasonable confinement, cruel punishment, photographing vulnerable adults for immoral or illegal purposes without consent, sexual abuse, intimidation, or exploitation.

Who Might Be a Victim?

Any person 18 years of age and older who is unable to manage and take care of him/herself or his/her money, assets or property without help as a result of advanced age or physical or mental disability.

Who Commits Elder Abuse?

A person or persons who commit elder abuse could be an intimate partner, an adult child, other family members, caregivers, or those in positions of authority. Abusers could also be strangers who introduce themselves to the vulnerable adult and befriends them or takes advantage of them. Abuse can take place anywhere.

Types of Elder Abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Self-neglect
- Exploitation
- Intimidation

Signs of Elder Abuse:

Signs of Physical Abuse:

- Unexplained burns, broken bones, bruising or injuries
- Unnecessary use of restraints
- Untreated pressure ulcers

Signs of Sexual Abuse:

- Sudden/new sexually transmitted diseases
- Sleep disturbances
- Unexplained changes in mood or temperament, personal hygiene, substance use or abuse
- Sleep disturbances
- New onset of resistance to caregiving, such as bathing
- Shies away from being touched
- Hypervigilance.

Signs of Emotional Abuse:

- Sudden changes in normal routines
- Shame or guilt
- Avoidance of eye contact

Signs of Neglect:

- Dresses inappropriately
- Malnutrition or poor nutrition
- Untreated pressure ulcers
- Strong odors of urine or feces
- Lack of medication or assistive devices
- Lack of utilities
- Spoiled food
- Infestations of insects or rodents

Signs of Self-Neglect:

- Refusal of assistance from others
- Refusal of medical care
- Self-isolation
- Self-destructive behaviors
- Refusal to manage financial affairs

Signs of Abandonment:

- Vulnerable adult's report of being abandoned
- Missed appointments

Signs of Exploitation:

- Gifting large amounts of money to friends or family
- Does not have money for basic needs
- Does not pay bills

Signs of Intimidation:

- Isolation
- Limited time with family and friends
- Doesn't have access to phone or mail