

What is Elder Abuse?

“Elder Abuse” typically refers to physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of an elderly person. Elder abuse is often committed by a family member who tries to control the funds of an elderly person.

What is Elder Neglect?

“Neglect” occurs when a caretaker, including a facility, fails to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing and/or supportive services.

What is Financial Exploitation?

“Financial exploitation” involves a person, usually a close relative or friend, taking advantage of an elderly person. Scams and abusing power over finances are exploitation.

What are Some of the Warning Signs of Elder Abuse?

- Do you feel uneasy about how someone handles your money?
- Do you feel left alone?
- Do you feel uncomfortable about how someone uses your home or property?
- Has someone opened an account or credit card in your name?
- Are you feeling pressured to do things that you don't want to?

- Does anyone keep you from your friends or relatives?

If you or someone you know feels this way, there may be help available.

How Do I Report Abuse or Exploitation?

If you are in an emergency situation, please dial 911. If the situation is not life-threatening, there are several ways to report abuse and neglect:

- Police or Sheriff's Office
- Adult Protective Services
- Montana Legal Services Association
- Area Agency on Aging
- Local Ombudsman
- Office of Consumer Protection

What Kind of Help Can I Get?

Only local law enforcement and prosecutors can investigate and charge crimes. But, there are also different kinds of help for victims of elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation provided by state agencies and non-profit organizations.

What Services Does Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) Provide?

MLSA can provide free legal information, advice, and representation in civil, non-criminal, cases to persons over the age of 60

years who have been abused, neglected, or exploited. MLSA can also help victims of elder abuse find resources for non-legal problems. Call MLSA at 1-800-666-6899 or apply online at: www.mtlsa.org.

What Services does Montana DPHHS Provide?

The Legal Services Developer, in the Office on Aging, provides elder law training and resources to seniors, family members, and social outreach workers. The program also provides pro bono and local legal services referrals, training materials and telephone assistance. Call 1-800-332-2272 (normal business hours). You can also visit <http://dphhs.mt.gov/sltc/aging/legalservicesdeveloper>.

Adult Protective Services protects vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation by investigating and referring victims to resources and community partners. You can call APS at 1-844-277-9300, or go online to their website at: <http://dphhs.mt.gov/SLTC/APS>

What Services Do Ombudsman Provide?

Local ombudsman can help residents in long-term care facilities to exercise their rights. Ombudsman can investigate reports of abuse or neglect made by the victim, family, or other persons. You can call the state Ombudsman at 1-800-332-2272, or reach your local Ombudsman at 1-800-551-3191, or visit <http://dphhs.mt.gov/SLTC/aging/longtermcareombudsman.aspx>

What Services Does the Office for Consumer Protection (OCP) Provide?

OCP enforces consumer laws designed to protect customers from deceptive business practices. OCP can file claims on behalf of the financially exploited victim. You can call OCP at 1-800-481-6896 or visit <https://dojmt.gov/consumer/>

What Services Do Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) Provide?

AAAs provide a network of organizations that serve the elderly population (60+) of their local area. There are 10 AAAs addressing health care, retirement, housing, employment, and community services. You can call AAA at 1-800-551-3191, or visit their webpage at: <http://dphhs.mt.gov/sltc/aging/areaagenciesonaging>

How do I get more help?

Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) provides free civil legal help to low-income people. Contact us to see if you qualify:

- Apply anytime online at mtlsa.org;
- Call our Helpline at 1-800-666-6899 (Helpline hours are limited).

What help can I find at MLSA?

- Legal advice and representation;
- Referrals to volunteer attorneys and other providers;
- Self-help clinics and materials.

www.MontanaLawHelp.org

Need legal information or forms? Visit www.MontanaLawHelp.org.

Can't find what you want? Use LiveHelp. Click on the LiveHelp icon and get help finding the information you need.

www.MTLSA.org

Find copies of all our brochures online. They are all available for free download!

Montana Legal Services Association

Elder Law:

Abuse, Neglect, and Financial Exploitation



Providing, protecting, and enhancing access to justice.

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This pamphlet is meant to give basic legal information, not legal advice about your problem. The law changes often and each case is different. We recommend you talk to an attorney about your legal problem.

