Pennsylvania Older Adult Protective Services Act addresses:

Physical abuse
Verbal/emotional abuse
Sexual abuse
Financial exploitation
Neglect
Abandonment
Self-neglect

The Pennsylvania Older Adult Protective Services Act

- helps the victim and the caregiver through intervention.
- establishes a program to first detect abuse or neglect, and then reduce, correct or eliminate incidents of abuse or neglect involving older adults.
- defines protective services as activities, resources and supports to detect, prevent, reduce or eliminate abuse, neglect (including self-neglect), financial exploitation and abandonment of older adults.

DHS is

responsible for providing and administering publicly funded human services to Allegheny County residents.

DHS Principles

All services will be:

- High quality, comprehensive and accessible.
- Individualized and designed to be respectful of the unique cultural characteristics of each individual and/or community.
- Integrated and offered through a team approach that recognizes the capacity of individuals and families to identify their own strengths, needs and goals; create relationships and natural supports; and take steps necessary to accomplish these goals.

DHS Area Agency on Aging – Administration

Rich Fitzgerald, *Allegheny County Executive*

Marc Cherna, *Director, Department of Human Services*

Patricia L. Valentine, *DHS Executive Deputy Director for Integrated Program Services*

Mildred E. Morrison, *Administrator, Area Agency on Aging*

Area Agency on Aging
SeniorLine: 412 350-5460
Fax: 412-350-4330
Toll-free: 1-800-344-4319
TTY: 412-350-2727

Birmingham Towers
2100 Wharton Street, Second floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15203
www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/olderadultabuse

Older Adult Protective Services Unit
412-350-6905
Fax: 412-350-4206

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of a protected class including: race; color; religion; national origin; ancestry or place of birth; sex; gender identity or expression; sexual orientation; disability; marital status; familial status; age (40 and older); use of guide or support animal because of blindness, deafness or physical disability.

DHS funding information is available at
www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/funding.aspx

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Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

Older Adult Protective Services

Older Adult Protective Services intervenes in situations where an individual 60 years of age or older becomes the object of abuse or neglect at the hands of another person. The program will also become involved when an older adult demonstrates an inability to meet his or her own basic needs.

412-350-6905
or 1-800-490-8505 (statewide)

24/7 Older Adult Protective Services Hotlines

The Process

A concerned individual (e.g., relative, friend, neighbor) suspects an older adult is at risk for, or the object of, abuse or neglect and calls 412-350-6905 or 1-800-490-8505 (Statewide) to report the concern. Or, an older adult who feels s/he is being abused or neglected, or is unable to meet her/his own basic needs, decides to call. The reporter may remain anonymous or use his/her name. *In either case, the reporter's name will never be made public.*

A trained staff member takes the call and determines whether or not the facts meet the criteria for an eligible report.

The older adult must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for a report of need.

- a resident of Pennsylvania;
- 60 years of age or older;
- without a responsible caregiver;
- unable to perform or obtain services necessary to maintain physical or mental health; AND
- at imminent risk of danger to person or property.

If eligible, the case is assigned to a caseworker.

- In emergency or life-threatening situations, the investigation will begin immediately.
- Otherwise, the caseworker will conduct an investigation that begins with a face-to-face interview with the older adult within 24 to 72 hours, depending on the urgency.

If the investigation determines that the older adult is incapacitated (lacking in the ability to care for him/herself because of mental or physical disability) and abuse or neglect is occurring, the caseworker will take appropriate action to reduce or eliminate the risk to the older adult.

If the investigation finds the case does not meet the criteria to qualify for protective services, the case is labeled unsubstantiated and closed. If the older adult is in need of other services, the caseworker offers the capacitated older adult help.

Emphasis is always placed on the individual's right to self-determination. Anyone, who has mental capacity, has the legal right to refuse services. If services are refused, the case is closed.

Help may include a care plan for any or all of the following:

- In-home services
- Financial management services
- Court-ordered intervention or guardianship determination (extreme circumstances)

Call 412-350-6905 or 1-800-344-4319 for 24/7 Older Adult Protective Services Hotlines