Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD), Adult Protective Services (APS) has legislative authority to receive and investigate reports of abuse, neglect, exploitation, isolation or abandonment for vulnerable adults age 18-59, in addition to persons 60 years and older, collectively referred to as vulnerable adults. Adult Protective Services serves all of Nevada.

Vulnerable adult abuse is a crime – If the APS worker believes that a crime has been committed against a vulnerable adult, a referral is made to the appropriate law enforcement agency for possible investigation and prosecution.

Mission Statement:

To assist vulnerable adults, age 18 to 59, in addition to persons 60 years and older who are abused, neglected, exploited, isolated or abandoned by investigating, providing or arranging for services to alleviate and prevent further maltreatment while safeguarding their civil liberties.

Adult Protective Services Include:

Investigation

Evaluation
Arrangement/Referral for other services

*Protective services are provided if the individual is willing to accept these services.*

Who Can Report a Case of Vulnerable Adult Abuse?

Any person may report an incident of abuse if they have reasonable cause to believe that a vulnerable adult has been abused, neglected, exploited, isolated or abandoned. All information received as a result of a report is maintained as confidential.

**Mandatory reporters** must make the report immediately after the event, but no later than 24 hours after there is reason to believe that a vulnerable adult has been abused, neglected, exploited, isolated or abandoned. Mandatory reporters include, but are not limited to:

- Medical professionals
- Employees of hospitals and home health agencies
- Social workers
- Coroners
- Law enforcement employees
- Adult or juvenile probation officers
- Department of Health and Human Services’ employees
- Mortuary or funeral home employees
- Employees of the facilities providing care for older persons
- Music therapists
To report suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation, isolation, or abandonment of a vulnerable adult, please utilize these phone numbers:

Las Vegas/Clark County
(702) 486-6930

Statewide/All Other Areas
(888) 729-0571

If a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, the local police, sheriff’s office or emergency medical service should be contacted. If the person is not in immediate danger, the report should be made via one of the designated phone numbers.
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NRS 200.5092 Definitions

“Older person” means a person who is 60 years of age or older.

“Vulnerable person” means a person 18 years of age or older who:

(a) Suffers from a condition of physical or mental incapacitation because of a developmental disability, organic brain damage or mental illness; or

(b) Has one or more physical or mental limitations that restrict the ability of the person to perform the normal activities of daily living.

Types of Abuse

Infliction of pain or injury on a vulnerable adult.

Deprivation of food, shelter, clothing or services which are necessary to maintain the physical or mental health of a vulnerable adult.

Signs to Look For/Examples:

- Abrasions, cuts or bruises
- Asphyxiation or hypothermia
- Untreated bed sores
- Broken or dislocated bones
- Burns or scalding
- Unexplained injuries or wounds
- Over sedation, poisoning
- Over/under medicating
- Friction from restraints
- Dehydration/malnutrition

Infliction of psychological or emotional anguish, pain or
distress on a vulnerable adult. **Signs to Look For/Examples:**

- Harming, damaging or destroying property, including without limitation, pets.
- Disregarding the needs of the vulnerable adult.
- Threatening, controlling or intimidating the vulnerable adult.
- Humiliation.
- Verbal assaults.

Nonconsensual sexual contact with a vulnerable adult. Nonconsensual sexual contact is an act that the vulnerable person is unable to understand or is unable to communicate his/her objection to.

Anytime sexual abuse is alleged, Law Enforcement must be contacted immediately. **Signs to Look For/Examples:**

- Difficulty walking or sitting.
- Vulnerable adult is newly diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease.
- The vulnerable adult is pregnant.
- Sudden, marked change in personality or demeanor.
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing.

Any act taken by a person who has the trust and confidence of a vulnerable adult to obtain control of the vulnerable adult’s money, assets, or property or convert the vulnerable adult’s money, assets, or property through either deception, intimidation, undue influence with the intention of permanently depriving the vulnerable adult of: ownership, use, benefit or possession of his or her money, assets or property

Any use of the power of attorney or guardianship of a vulnerable adult to do the above

“Undue influence” means the improper use of power or trust in a
way that deprives a person of his or her free will and substitutes the objectives of another person. The term does not include the normal influence that one member of a family has over another.

**Signs to Look For/Examples:**

- Unauthorized signatures on checks or financial documents.
- Unusual withdrawals from banks or other financial institutions.
- Missing money or property.
- Sudden and unusual bank activity.
- Unusual purchases.

When a person who has voluntarily assumed responsibility to provide necessary supervision, food, shelter, clothing, or services which are necessary to maintain physical/mental health of the vulnerable adult and then fails to provide those things.

Neglect does NOT need to be intentional. **Signs to Look For/Examples:**

- The vulnerable adult has bad hygiene and smells of foul odor and/or has long, dirty, and unkempt finger and/or toenails
- The vulnerable adult’s home is in dilapidated condition
- The vulnerable adult is living in hoarding conditions or living with no running water, heat, or electricity
- The vulnerable adult is found soiled and the house smells of urine/feces

Physically restraining and/or intentionally preventing the person from having visitors, mail, or telephone calls. **Signs to Look For/Examples:**

The vulnerable adult’s support system, both formal and informal, has increasingly restricted access to the vulnerable adult,
e.g.:

- visitors are turned away
- phone calls blocked
- phone number changed
- mail not given to the vulnerable adult

The vulnerable adult’s ability to contact others is made difficult by:

- denying the vulnerable adult access to a phone
- disconnecting the vulnerable adult’s phone

There is a change in the vulnerable adult’s doctors, attorneys, etc.

- The vulnerable adult’s mailing address is changed to a PO Box or the Person of Interest’s address.
- The vulnerable adult is told that friends and/or family are mad at him/her (as reason they are not visiting).

Desertion of a vulnerable adult in an unsafe manner and/or withdrawal of necessary assistance owed to the vulnerable adult by a caregiver or person with a legal duty of care. 

**Signs to Look For/Examples:**

- Cognitively impaired vulnerable adult is deserted at hospital ER waiting room, bus station, church, etc. and left by caregiver who does not return.
- The vulnerable adult cannot manage without assistance and the caregiver goes away without making plans for coverage.
- Caregiver takes the vulnerable adult to another city and leaves him/her there without making arrangements for his/her care.

The failure of a vulnerable adult to provide for his/her own needs because of an inability to do so. A vulnerable adult has a
right to self-determination – the ability to make his/her own choices, good or bad, unless a judge has declared the person incompetent.

Self-Neglect is NOT a crime.

**Signs to Look For/Examples:**

- Vulnerable adult is unable/fails/refuses to take in adequate amounts of food and fluids.
- Vulnerable adult has a noticeable weight loss or is showing signs of malnutrition.
- Vulnerable adult is eating food that is potentially unsafe or harmful to his/her health condition.
- Vulnerable adult is unable/fails/refuses to dress him/herself appropriately.
- Vulnerable adult is unable/fails/refuses to attend to personal hygiene and smells of foul odor.
- Vulnerable adult’s home is unclean and/or hazardous (e.g., soiled and smells of urine/feces or no running water, heat, or electricity).
- Vulnerable adult is unable/fails/refuses medical care and/or mental health services.
- Vulnerable adult is unable/fails/refuses to take his/her medication.
- Bills are unpaid/payments are late.
- Utilities are shut off or at risk of being shut off.
- Vulnerable adult is unable/fails/refuses to protect his/her money from scams or others.

- Fearful
- Easily frightened
- Confused
- Overly emotional
- Depressed
- Unresponsive or withdrawn
- Lack of cleanliness/grooming
- Anxious to please
- Fear of speaking for oneself in the presence of the caretaker
- Shame/embarrassment
- Sudden change in financial activity such as unusual cash withdrawals from their accounts in a short period of time

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