

# Adult Protective Services

## WHAT IS Adult Protective Services (APS)?

APS is a social services program focused on helping older adults and individuals with disabilities live with dignity and respect by investigating allegations of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation.

## WHO CAN RECEIVE APS services?

In Virginia, APS serves adults who are:

- ✓ 60 years of age or older; or
- ✓ 18-59 years of age and incapacitated
- ✓ Living in the community or a residential setting except for state correctional facilities

## HOW DO YOU DEFINE Abuse, Neglect, Self-Neglect, and Exploitation?

Below are some common definitions. For more information visit our website at [dars.virginia.gov/aps/](https://dars.virginia.gov/aps/).

### Abuse



Abuse comes in physical, mental, or sexual forms and can have physical or emotional signs.

### Neglect



Neglect is when a caregiver fails to provide adequate assistance that the adult depends on—such as food, clothing, shelter, or necessary medical care.

### Self-Neglect



Self-Neglect is when an adult is unable to meet their own essential physical, psychological, or social needs, which threatens their health, safety, and well-being.

### Exploitation

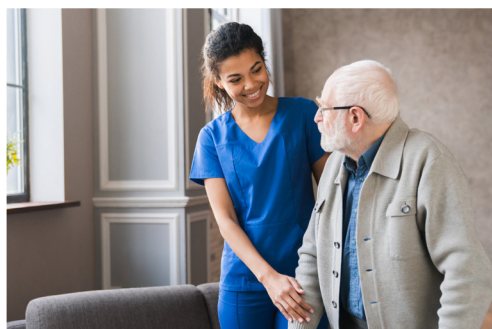


Exploitation is when someone takes advantage of the adult or their finances for personal benefit or financial gain.

## WHO ARE Mandated Reporters?

In Virginia, mandated reporters are any person licensed, certified, or registered by health regulatory boards listed in § 54.1-2503 of the Code of Virginia, except persons licensed by the Board of Veterinary Medicine. Mandated reporters also include professionals and other providers who support the adult in an administrative or direct care capacity. Some examples are:

- ✓ Pharmacists and Technicians
- ✓ Emergency Response Service Providers
- ✓ Homemaker, Chore, Companion or Personal Care Providers
- ✓ Healthcare, Medical or Dental Service Providers
- ✓ Law Enforcement Personnel
- ✓ Licensed Professional Counselors
- ✓ Social Service Workers



## WHY ARE **Mandated Reporters** required to report?

Mandated reporters, together with APS, play an important role in helping seniors and adults with disabilities live lives free of maltreatment. For that reason, mandated reporters are required to report incidents to APS immediately, and may be penalized financially for failing to report suspected incidents of abuse, neglect, self-neglect and exploitation.



## HOW DO YOU **report to APS**?

- 1 Contact APS using the information below.
- 2 Make sure to provide the following information, but please note that you can make this report anonymously if you so choose:
  - ✓ The individual's name, address, age/date of birth, or other identifying information
  - ✓ Why they are at risk for abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation
  - ✓ Descriptions of the situation, any important identifiers of the alleged abuser, or other dangers in their home environment



## WHAT HAPPENS **after reporting**?

APS evaluates the report for validity and will investigate the suspected abuse, neglect, self-neglect or exploitation, and connect the individual with support services if the individual wishes to receive them.

We understand that every adult individual has the right to self-determination; APS cannot force anyone to accept help (except in a limited set of circumstances) if they do not wish to receive it. APS does not have the authority to sanction facilities or providers. We also cannot control whether or not law enforcement opens an investigation. APS investigations are confidential, so we may not be able to provide you with the details of the investigation.

## WHAT IF **I'm not sure**?

Do you just have a “feeling” about a situation but can't verify the details? APS professionals are trained to handle such situations. Based on your report, APS will assess the situation and determine how best to respond. Your local department can determine the best course of action in any given situation.



Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services

To report suspected adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation, call your **[local department of social services](#)** or the 24-hour, toll-free APS hotline at: (888) 832-3858.