

Appendix B

Preventing Abuse, Neglect, & Exploitation

1. Definition

Adult and child abuse refers to any form of mistreatment of a person by a caregiver, family member, spouse, or friend. Categories of abuse include:

A. Abuse

Intentional infliction of physical, mental, or verbal harm and/or unreasonable confinement.

B. Sexual abuse or sexual assault

Sexual contact with any person incapable of giving consent, either by force or through threatening behavior or through force or coercion, which means by force or threatening.

C. Neglect

Failing to provide a person food, water, clothing, medicine, medical services, shelter, cooling, heating, or other services necessary to maintain minimum physical or mental health. Shelter refers to housing but also refers to the environment in which one lives. Leaving a person in unsafe or hazardous environments can be neglect. For children this also applies to parents leaving a child with no one to care for him/her, or leaving a child with a caretaker and not returning or making other arrangements for his/her care.

D. Financial exploitation

The improper or unauthorized use of a person's funds, property, or assets. This includes forgery, stealing money or possessions, or tricking a person into signing documents that transfer funds, property, or assets. For children this also includes using a child for material gain, including forcing a child to panhandle, steal or perform other illegal or involuntary activities.

E. Emotional abuse

Psychological abuse such as name-calling, insults, threats, and intimidation.

2. Risk Factors

A. Adult abuse

- Previous incidents of domestic violence by spouse.
- Financial dependency of the adult on the abuser.
- Mental illness of abuser.
- Adult children living with older parent.
- Abuser isolates adult to prevent the abuse from being discovered.

B. Child abuse

- Child living in area with high poverty, unemployment, or crime rates.
- Child has physical and/or mental disability.
- Abuser has history of physical or sexual abuse.
- Abuser has low self-esteem, abuses drugs or alcohol, or suffers from depression or mental illness.

3. Signs

A. Adult abuse

- Physical: bruises, broken bones, cuts, or other untreated injuries in various stages of healing.
- Behavioral: isolation, alarming actions, unprovoked outbursts, or withdrawing from previously enjoyed activities.
- Sexual: bruises around breast or genital area; signs of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Pregnancy in at-risk adults can sometimes be a sign of abuse.
- Emotional: adult is upset or agitated, withdrawn, non-communicative, or paranoid.
- Neglect: dehydration, malnutrition, pressure ulcers, poor personal hygiene, and unsafe or unsanitary living conditions.
- Financial: unusual banking activity; missing financial statements or other personal effects such as jewelry; signatures on checks that do not match adult's signature.

B. Child Abuse

- Physical: bruises, broken bones, cuts, or other untreated injuries in various stages of healing.
- Behavioral: isolation, alarming actions, unprovoked outbursts, or withdrawing from previously enjoyed activities.
- Sexual: bruises around breast or genital area; signs of sexually

transmitted diseases (STDs), pregnancy. Emotional: eating disorders; speech disorders; developmental delay; cruel behavior; behavioral extremes.

- Neglect: poor hygiene; absenteeism from school; hunger; tiredness; begging for or collecting leftovers; assuming adult responsibilities; reporting no caretaker at home.

4. Prevention

- A. Learn the facts and recognize the signs of abuse, alarming behaviors, neglect, and exploitation.
- B. Get involved in social activities
- C. Talk to neighbors, family, and friends
- D. Be willing to accept help from others
- E. Know your resources and know who to call for help

5. Reporting Requirements

- A. According to Colorado Law C.R.S. 26-3.1-102 (2014), all persons who observe the mistreatment, self-neglect, or exploitation of an **at-risk adult** or who has reasonable cause to believe that an at-risk adult has been mistreated, is self-neglected, or has been exploited and is at imminent risk of mistreatment, self-neglect, or exploitation **are urged** to report such fact to a county department not more than twenty-four hours after making the observation or discovery.
- B. Also, as required by Colorado Law CRS 18-6.5-108, all persons who observe the abuse or exploitation of an **at-risk elder**, or who have reasonable cause to believe that an at-risk elder has been abused or exploited or is at imminent risk of abuse or exploitation shall report such fact to a law enforcement agency not more than twenty-four hours after making the observation or discovery.

C. Immunity

Persons making a report of mistreatment of an at-risk adult or at-risk elder in good faith are immune from civil or criminal liability unless they are the perpetrator.

D. False Reports

Reporters who **knowingly** make a false report may be charged with a misdemeanor, punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$750 fine, or both.

6. Legal Penalties

Any person who has been employed to provide care to an incapacitated or vulnerable adult or elder and who causes or permits the person's life to be endangered or his/her health to be injured or endangered by neglect or abuse can be found guilty of a felony.

NOTE



An individual who is found guilty of a felony will face jail time; a felony conviction limits the type of jobs the individual can hold in the future. For example, convicted felons are unable to work in most healthcare or educational systems.

Adult Protective Services Contact Information³

County	APS Contact
Adams	303-227-2049
Alamosa	719-589-2581
Arapahoe	303-636-1750
Archuleta	970-264-2182
Baca	719-523-4131
Bent	719-456-2620
Boulder	303-441-1309
Broomfield	720-887-2271
Chaffee	719-539-6627
Cheyenne	719-767-5629
Clear Creek	303-679-2365
Conejos	719-376-5455
Costilla	719-672-4131
Crowley	719-267-3549
Custer	719-783-2371
Delta	970-872-1000
Denver	720-944-2994
Dolores	970-677-2250
Douglas	303-663-6270
Eagle	970-328-7720
El Paso	719-444-5755
Elbert	303-621-3210
Fremont	719-275-2318
Garfield	970-945-9193
Gilpin	303-582-5444
Grand	970-725-3331
Gunnison	970-641-3244
Huerfano	719-738-2810
Hinsdale	970-641-3244
Jackson	970-723-4750
Jefferson	303-271-4673
Kiowa	719-438-5541

County	APS Contact
Kit Carson	719-346-8732
La Plata	970-382-6150
Lake	719-486-0393
Larimer	970-498-7770
Las Animas	719-846-2276
Lincoln	719-743-2404
Logan	970-522-2194
Mesa	970-248-2888
Mineral	719-657-3381
Moffat	970-824-8282
Montezuma	970-565-3769
Montrose	970-252-7076
Morgan	970-542-3530
Otero	719-383-3166
Ouray	970-626-2299
Park	303-816-5939
Phillips	970-854-2280
Pitkin	970-429-2047
Prowers	719-336-7486
Pueblo	719-583-6853
Rio Blanco	970-878-9640
Rio Grande	719-657-3381
Routt	970-870-5533
Saguache	719-655-2637
San Juan	970-382-6150
San Miguel	970-728-4411
Sedgwick	970-474-3397
Summit	970-485-5353
Teller	719-686-5550
Washington	970-345-2238
Weld	970-346-7676
Yuma	970-332-4877

³ Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Community Access & Independence, Division of Aging & Adult Services: APS Contact List, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6jLab7wPqJteG9fbFRXam5XMVVMQVIOVVZ4cGhuWktzZ3k0/view> (accessed 9/30/2016)