

# Your Safety and Elder Abuse



## Know about Elder Abuse

### What is “elder abuse?”

Elder Abuse has many forms. It can mean any mistreatment of a senior. Examples include confinement, neglect, abandonment, bodily injury, unwanted sexual contact, verbal intimidation and threats, and financial exploitation.

***Myth: “We don't have that problem in our community.”***

**Fact: Abuse is often not seen or recognized.**

Some people believe that elder abuse is not a problem in their community. Unfortunately, every community, no matter the size, nationality, income, or religion, has its share of invisible seniors suffering from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

***Myth: “It's just part of growing old.”***

**Fact: Abuse is preventable. It should not be tolerated by anyone.**

Every senior deserves respect, and no one should tolerate abuse. No senior should be physically harmed, deprived of food or medicine, sexually harassed, unreasonably coerced to live where they don't want to, or have their money or property misused or stolen.

### **Elder Abuse May Look Like:**

- Emotional and verbal abuse
- Physical abuse or restraint
- Neglect
- Financial exploitation
- Not letting other friends or family members see the elder.
- Abusers may be: family members, caregivers, trusted friends

**Civil remedies.** If you are the victim of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation, one remedy you have is the ability to revoke a power of attorney document if the person named in that document is not acting in your interest. You also have the option of bringing a civil lawsuit against an abusive party. A civil lawsuit is a non-criminal case that seeks money to compensate for physical or financial harms. For example, if an adult child took money from a senior's bank account without her permission, a civil lawsuit could be filed to try and get the money returned. If you are interested in pursuing a civil lawsuit, you may want to talk with an attorney about your case. Another option available to victims of physical or sexual abuse is the Civil Protection Order (CPO), which orders an abusive family member or household member to stay away from you. To get a CPO, you apply at the local courthouse and give a sworn statement. A free CPO form is also available at [idaholegalaid.org](http://idaholegalaid.org).

**Criminal remedies.** Criminal remedies are focused on punishing a person who has violated the law. Several Idaho laws protect seniors from fraud, theft, physical abuse, neglect, and unwanted sexual contact. If you suspect that you are a victim of a crime, you can call the police and they will investigate. Filing criminal charges can be helpful in ensuring your safety by getting an abuser behind bars and because you can request a No Contact Order in some criminal cases.

### **What to know:**

You shouldn't have to live in fear or violence.

You don't deserve abuse.

It's not your fault if someone is abusing you.

You can make decisions for yourself.

People should have your permission to make decisions for you.

You can find help.

Many people have experienced what you are going through.

## **Know who to call:**

If you or someone else is in danger, call 911.

If you are suffering from ongoing abuse or neglect, call Adult Protection Services. Adult Protection Investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults. Adult Protection can work with the police, Health and Welfare, nursing homes, banks and lawyers to investigate and address cases of abuse and neglect.

If you, a neighbor, friend, or family member is suffering abuse or neglect at the hands of another person, call Adult Protection Services. You can learn more about Adult Protection on the Idaho Commission on Aging's website: [www.aging.idaho.gov](http://www.aging.idaho.gov).

## **Get Involved:**

### **Justice Alliance for Vulnerable Adults**

The Idaho Justice Alliance for Vulnerable Adults (JAVA) is a network of organizations and individuals working to prevent elder abuse through action and education. JAVA's vision is to help its members work together towards an Idaho where every vulnerable adult is visible and valued. You can visit their website at [javaidaho.org](http://javaidaho.org).

## **Area Agency on Aging & Adult Protection Services**

**County**

**Adult Protection Services**

**Ombudsman**

Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, & Shoshone	(208) 667-3179 or 1-800-786-5536	(208) 667-3179 x 223 1-800-786-5536
Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, & Nez Perce	(208) 743-5580 or 1-800-877-3206	(208) 798-4195 1-800-877-3206
Ada, Adams, Boise, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Valley, & Washington	(208) 898-7060 or 1-844-850-2883	(208) 898-7060 1-844-850-2883
Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, & Twin Falls	(208) 736-2122 or 1-800-574-8656	(208) 933-2396 1-800-574-8656
Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida, & Power	(208) 233-4032 or 1-800-526-8129	(208) 233-4032 x 804 1-800-526-8129
Butte, Bonneville, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, & Teton	(208) 522-5391 or 1-800-632-4813	(208) 522-5370 x 1031 1-800-632-4813

## **Idaho Commission on Aging Resources**

The Idaho Commission on Aging (ICOA) helps provide Idaho's seniors with basic necessities like transportation, nutrition, in-home services, and respite care. ICOA helps seniors remain independent and avoid going into an institution.

## **Aging and Disability Resource Center**

Visit the Aging and Disability Resource Center at [www.aging.idaho.gov](http://www.aging.idaho.gov) to find helpful information for people planning long term care, to get help applying for government benefits, and to get answers to many of seniors' most common questions about their rights and options. You can also contact the ADRC by calling 1-800-926-2588.

## **Area Agencies on Aging**

Area Agencies on Aging in Idaho help seniors with many types of problems. Your local AAA may be able to help you with these services:

- Help with chores and homemaking
- Help for Caregivers
- Group Meals
- Home Delivered Meals
- Transportation Help
- Legal Assistance
- Respite Services

## **Ombudsmen**

Ombudsmen are advocates for residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities. They provide information about how to find a facility and what to do to get quality care. They are trained to resolve problems. If you want, the ombudsman can assist you with complaints. However, unless you give the ombudsman permission to share your concerns, these matters are kept confidential.

**For more information about these services, call your local AAA office, the numbers are listed above, or visit [aging.idaho.gov](http://aging.idaho.gov).**

Last updated on October 25, 2022.

[Personal Safety Senior Citizens Resources for Seniors](#)

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