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## **Adult Protective Services in Virginia**

Each year, many older adults and younger adults with disabilities are victims of mistreatment by family members or by persons who are responsible for their care.

If you feel you are being mistreated, you may be eligible for protective services if:

- You are 60 years of age or older; or
- You are a person with a disability who is 18 years of age or older.

### **Report Suspected Abuse**

Some people are required by the Code of Virginia to report suspected abuse of adults to Adult Protective Services. Physicians, people who work in the nursing profession, persons employed by public or private agencies or facilities that work with adults, persons who provide care to adults, social workers, mental health professionals, and law enforcement officers are required to report. Any other person may voluntarily report suspected abuse to adult protective services.

### **Will Anyone Know Who Reported?**

The name of the person who makes the report will be held confidential by the local department of social services. The name of the person who made the report cannot be revealed unless the person gives permission or the court orders that the name be revealed. You do not have to give your name when you make a report.

### **Examples of Adult Abuse**

Listed below are some examples of adult abuse:

- The person who provides care to you purposely causes you pain or injury;
- The person who is responsible for your care does not assist you in keeping needed medical appointments;

- Food, water, medication, assistance with your personal needs, or other essential goods or services are withheld from you;
- You are restrained for the convenience of facility, staff or your caregiver or as a means of punishment
- Someone yells at you or purposely does something to hurt your feelings;
- A person uses threats to get you to do something for him/her;
- The person responsible for managing your financial affairs uses your money for his/her own purposes without your consent;
- Someone touches private parts of your body without your consent;

### **You Have Rights**

- You have the right to be safe;
- You have the right to be treated with respect; and
- You have the right to be free from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

**Help is Available** If you feel that you are being mistreated, contact your local department of social services and ask for an adult protective services social worker, or, you may call the 24-hour, toll-free hotline at:

**1-888-83-ADULT or 1-888-832-3858**

### **What Are Adult Protective Services?**

Adult Protective Services are provided regardless of the person's income or financial resources to adults who are incapacitated and who are 18 years of age or older, to persons 60 years or older, and to their families when appropriate. Adult Protective Services include:

- the receipt and investigation of reports that an adult is abused, neglected, or exploited or at-risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation
- the provision of a wide variety of health, housing, social and legal services to stop the mistreatment and prevent further mistreatment
- the potential to intervene legally to provide essential protection to persons who are in emergency situations and lack the capacity to consent to services.

Adult Protective Services reports are received by local departments of social services or through the 24-hour, toll-free hotline at **1-888-832-3858**

Any person who suspects that an elder or an incapacitated adult is abused, neglected, or exploited should make a report.

**Abuse and Neglect of an Incapacitated Adult is a Crime.** Section 18.2-369 of the Code of Virginia creates a criminal offense for the abuse or neglect of an incapacitated adult by any person responsible for the adult's care, custody or control.

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