

Elder Justice

A Resource Guide for Action



**This Resource Guide was created by WISE & Healthy Aging,
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WISE
Healthy Aging



Recognizing the Signs...

Physical Abuse

- Signs of being restrained, such as rope marks on wrists
- Unexplained signs of injury such as bruises, welts, scars, broken bones or sprains
- Over or under medication
- Broken eyeglasses or frame
- Caregiver's refusal to allow you to see the person alone
- Report of drug overdose or apparent failure to take medication regularly
- Physical or chemical restraints for caregiver's convenience

Emotional Abuse

- Threatening, belittling, or controlling caregiver behavior that you witness
- Caregiver isolates elder; refusing to allow access to visitors, mail, phone, etc.
- Uncharacteristic behavior such as withdrawal or changes in alertness

Sexual Abuse

- Bruises around breasts or genitals
- Unexplained sexually transmitted diseases or unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing

Neglect by Caregivers or Self-Neglect

- Unusual weight loss, malnutrition, dehydration
- Untreated physical problems, such as bed sores
- Unsanitary living conditions: dirt, bugs, soiled bedding and clothes
- Poor hygiene, lack of clean or appropriate clothing
- Unsafe living conditions (no heat or running water; faulty electrical wiring, fire hazards)
- Desertion of the elder at a public place

Financial Exploitation

- Significant or unauthorized withdrawals from the elder's accounts
- Sudden changes in the elder's financial condition
- Items or cash missing from the household
- Suspicious changes in wills, power of attorney, titles, and policies
- Addition of names to the elder's signature card
- Unpaid bills or lack of medical care, although the elder has enough money to pay for them
- Financial activity the elder couldn't have done, such as ATM withdrawals by a bedridden account holder
- Unnecessary services, goods, or subscriptions
- Unusual change in spending habits

Scams

- Constant phone calls from various phone numbers
- Elder/adult suddenly wiring money
- Large accumulation of lottery mail
- Elder/adult secretive about a relationship with someone they have not met in person

Resources...

General Information

- City of Los Angeles Department of Aging and Information and Assistance: **213-482-7252**
- County of Los Angeles Area Agency on Aging: **800-510-2020**
- Department of Community and Senior Services: www.css.lacounty.gov **213-738-4004**
- Los Angeles County Information and Referral, dial: **211** www.infoline-la.org
- City of Los Angeles Information and Referral, dial: **311** or visit www.lacity.org/311-services
- WISE & Healthy Aging Information & Referral for senior services: **310-394-9871**

Legal Assistance

- Bet Tzedek Legal Services: www.bettzedek.org **323-939-0506**
- California State Attorney General: www.ag.ca.gov **800-952-5225**
- Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles: www.lafla.org **800-399-4529**
- Los Angeles City Attorney's Office Elder Abuse Hotline: **877-477-3646**
- Los Angeles County Bar Association Lawyer Referral & Information Smart Law www.smartlaw.org **213-243-1525**
- Los Angeles County District Attorney Elder Abuse Section: **213-257-2290**
- Los Angeles County Public Administrator - Public Guardian: **213-974-0515**
- CANHR State Bar Certified Lawyer Referral Service: **800-474-1116**

Domestic Violence

- National Domestic Violence Hotline: **800-799-7233**
- Domestic Violence Hotline Southern California: **800-978-3600**
(Callers may receive help in 13 languages)
- Jewish Family Service Family Violence Project: **818-505-0900 (crisis line)**
- VINE - Victim Information and Notification Everyday
(A service by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to notify you when the status of an inmate changes) **877-846-3452**

Mental Wellness

- County of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health,
Older Adult Services ACCESS Center
(Help regarding hoarding and other mental health issues): **800-854-7771**
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: **800-273-8255**
- Los Angeles Warmline (phone support): **855-952-9276**

Financial Fraud and Exploitation



Credit Card Fraud

If you are a victim of identity theft, or you want to avoid becoming a victim of identity theft, call these agencies to freeze new accounts being opened in your name. Also for disputes regarding your credit record.

Experian: www.experian.com **888-397-3742**

Equifax: www.equifax.com **800-525-6285**

TransUnion: www.transunion.com

800-680-7289

Free Annual Credit Report Request a free credit report: www.annualcreditreport.com
877-322-8228

Mail Fraud

U.S. Postal Inspection Service Report mail fraud: <http://postalinspectors.uspis.gov>
877-876-2455

Opt-out from unsolicited mail, pre-approved credit card and insurance offers:
888-567-8688

Direct Marketing Association Inc.
Remove name from mailing & emailing list:
www.dmachoice.org

Telephone Fraud

Federal Trade Commission (FTC)
Telemarketing fraud/identity theft:
877-382-4357

Do Not Call Registry Stop telemarketers from calling you: www.donotcall.gov
888-382-1222

Internet Crime/Spam

Internet Crime Complaint Center
www.ic3.gov

Broker/Investment Fraud

California Department of Business Oversight
Seniors Against Investment Fraud (SAIF)
866-275-2677

Concerns about brokers, investment advisers, financial planners, mortgage lenders and bill payers: www.corp.ca.gov

Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) BrokerCheck Check the background of a broker or brokerage: **800-289-9999**

Consumer Issues

California Department of Consumer Affairs
Check licenses for doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals: www.dca.ca.gov
800-952-5210

California Department of Insurance
Insurance concerns: www.insurance.ca.gov
800-927-4357

California Department of Real Estate
Real estate concerns: www.dre.ca.gov
213-620-2072

California Public Utilities Commission
Utility complaints: www.cpuc.ca.gov/puc
800-649-7570

Contractors State License Board
Concerns regarding licensed and unlicensed contractors: www.cslb.ca.gov
800-321-2752

Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs
Landlord/tenant issues, housing discrimination, homebuyer issues, consumer complaints:
www.dca.lacounty.gov
800-593-8222

Resources...

Social Security Administration

- www.socialsecurity.gov Fraud Hotline: **800-269-0271**

Medicare or Medi-Cal Fraud

- California Attorney General Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud & Elder Abuse: **800-722-0432**
On-line complaint form: www.ag.ca.gov/bmfea
- Center for Health Care Rights/California Health Advocates: www.cahealthadvocates.org
Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)
Medicare and healthcare counseling: **800-434-0222**
- Department of Health Services for Medi-Cal fraud: **800-822-6222**
- U.S. Health & Human Services TIPS Hotline to report Medicare fraud: **800-447-8477**
- Los Angeles County District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance
<http://da.co.la.ca.us>: **800-380-3811** or **626-927-2500**
- Ageless Alliance <http://agelessalliance.org>
(Uniting against elder abuse through awareness, support and community engagement)

Reporting...

Dial 911 to report elder abuse or neglect to the Police NOW if the abuse is immediate and life-threatening.

Elder Abuse Hotline at **877-477-3646** or **800-992-1660** to report allegations of abuse when you are unsure on where to call.

Adult Protective Services, County of Los Angeles, **888-202-4248** if you suspect elder abuse in the community. Call **213-351-5401** if you are outside of Los Angeles County.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman, at WISE & Healthy Aging **800-334-9473** and report suspected abuse occurring at board and care homes, nursing homes and assisted living facilities in LA County. Statewide Ombudsman after hours crisis line: **800-231-4024**.

Protecting Yourself...

Do:

- Stay active with your local senior center. It can be a valuable source of information.
- Plan for your care as you age. Identify reliable people who can provide assistance if needed.
- Review your finances regularly. Be extremely cautious when selecting “trustworthy” individuals to help manage your affairs when needed.
- Participate in community activities. Volunteering is a great way to have contact with others and make friends. Call WISE & Healthy Aging at **310-394-9871** for volunteer opportunities.

Don't:

- Don't put off preparing your future physical and financial needs.
- Don't accept personal care from anyone in exchange for property or assets without a lawyer or other trusted advocate to witness the transaction.
- Don't allow others to keep details of your finances from you.
- Don't give out personal or financial information to people you don't know, especially over the phone.
- Don't sign legal documents that you do not understand.

WISE & Healthy Aging is a non-profit, social services organization recognized for its wide range of innovative support services designed to meet the needs of a diverse clientele within the greater Los Angeles area.

Our mission is to advance the dignity and quality of life of older adults through leadership, advocacy and high-quality, innovative services.



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