

# PROTECT YOURSELF FROM ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION

Elder abuse can happen to anyone—a loved one, a neighbor, and when we are old enough it can happen to us. It is estimated that about 2.1 million older Americans, from all socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, and ethnicities, face abuse and neglect every year. Act now to protect yourself from potential abuse in the future.

## Plan

Plan for your future by talking with family members, friends, and professionals whom you trust:

- Have your income (e.g., retirement, Social Security, and disability payments) directly deposited into your checking account. Contact your bank or go to [www.godirect.org](http://www.godirect.org) for help.
- If managing your daily finances becomes difficult, use a daily money manager. Allow only someone you trust to manage your finances. Visit [www.aadmm.com](http://www.aadmm.com) or [www.aarpmmmp.org](http://www.aarpmmmp.org) for further information on professional money management services.
- Get your estate plan in place. Ask your attorney to help you create a living will, a revocable trust, and a durable power of attorney for health care and asset management. Name a person you trust to make health care and asset management decisions for you in the event you are not able to make those decisions for yourself. Designating co-powers of attorney can ensure that no one agent can act unilaterally.
- Learn about your options for long-term care, if it becomes necessary. Visit [www.medicare.gov/quality-care-finder/](http://www.medicare.gov/quality-care-finder/) for more info on long-term care facility quality.

## Be Cautious

- Learn about the types of elder abuse and neglect and associated warning signs.
- Get on the National Do Not Call Registry to reduce telemarketing calls. Visit [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov) or call 1-888-382-1222 to register your phone number.
- If you are offered a “prize,” “loan,” or “investment” that sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Consult with someone you trust before making a large purchase or investment and don’t be pressured or intimidated into immediate decisions.
- Don’t sign any documents that you don’t completely understand without first consulting an attorney or family member you trust.
- Do not provide personal information (e.g., Social Security number or credit card) over the phone unless you placed the call and know with whom you are speaking.
- Tear up or shred credit card receipts, bank statements, and financial records before disposing of them in the trash.
- If you hire someone for personal assistance services, in-home care, or other services, check that he or she has been properly screened, with criminal background checks completed.



**PROTECT SENIORS**  
Take a stand against **ELDER ABUSE.**

YEAR OF ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION



## Stay Connected

- Keep in touch regularly with others; isolation can make you vulnerable to abuse.
- Build a network of family, friends, neighbors, and groups that you can interact with on a regular basis.
- Keep active to prevent isolation. Get involved with your senior center or volunteer to become a senior companion or “classroom grandparent.” For more information visit [SeniorCorps.gov](http://SeniorCorps.gov).
- Join the National Association of Triads, a national partnership by which public safety officials, criminal justice professionals, and older adults collaborate to keep seniors safe from crime. For more information visit [NationalTriad.org](http://NationalTriad.org).
- Create a buddy system with other elders; call each other daily for reassurance and friendship, and visit each other if possible.

## Report

Making a report in instances of abuse or neglect is the right thing to do, and it's easy. Don't be afraid! Elders have a right to be safe.

- In cases of immediate danger, call 911.
- If you or others experience abuse or neglect in a community setting, Adult Protective Services (APS) can help. To learn more about APS, visit: [www.apsnetwork.org/Abuse/index.html](http://www.apsnetwork.org/Abuse/index.html).
- If you or others experience abuse or neglect in a long-term care facility (e.g., a nursing home or assisted living facility), the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program can help. To learn more about the ombudsman program, visit: [www.ltombudsman.org](http://www.ltombudsman.org).

**For more information:** Visit the website of the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA): [www.ncea.aoa.gov](http://www.ncea.aoa.gov), or contact us by email: [ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov](mailto:ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov), by phone: 1-855-500-3537.

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