Elder Justice
A Resource Guide for Action

This Resource Guide was created by WISE & Healthy Aging, and funded in part by the City and County of Los Angeles Area Agencies on 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
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
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.us: **800-380-3811** or **626-927-2500**
- Ageless Alliance http://agelessalliance.org
  (Uniting against elder abuse through awareness, support and community engagement)

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**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.**