



Support for Adult Protective Services in Ohio

What is Adult Protective Services?

- Adult protective services is a set of interventions designed to investigate and remedy elder abuse, neglect and self-neglect, and financial exploitation. Every state offers some form of protection for elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Ohio's law became effective in 1981 and is codified at 5101.60-5101.72 Ohio Revised Code.
- While the mandate to intervene in suspected cases of adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation is codified in state law, the mandate is administered by County DJFS offices and is almost entirely locally funded (most often through the county's federal Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) allocation).
- Attorney General Mike DeWine's Elder Abuse Commission has recommended a number of amendments to the law to strengthen it, add mandated reporters, and increase the responsibility of ODJFS. These amendments are in HB 49, which has passed the House.

Elder abuse, neglect and exploitation are both under-reported and a growing phenomenon.

- With the growth in the nation's (and Ohio's) aging population, unfortunately elder abuse, neglect and exploitation is on the rise. In the National Elder Mistreatment Study (2010) for the U.S. Department of Justice, Dr. Ron Acierno found an incidence rate of 11% of older adults reporting a form of harm (abuse or neglect) in the previous year, via a national telephone survey and an incidence rate of 5% for financial exploitation. The prevalence rate in a NY study by Dr. Mark Lachs and others is 7.6%, the same rate for the over 60 population for coronary artery disease.
- Incidents of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation are underreported. The NY study found startling under-reporting, on average only 1 out of 23.5 incidents reported to any authority, with 1/44 for exploitation and 1/57 for neglect. This study used telephone surveys, therefore with no data from those without phones, those unable to answer due to declining mental status and/or lack of privacy. Those are in fact the most at risk.
- The Ohio Health Policy Institute and Health Path Foundation funded a study focused on Family Violence Prevention. It projected in 2010 that an estimated 90,000-115,000 seniors age 60+ in the community were harmed through abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. However, only 7,530 were reported to APS during that time period. These figures exclude reports of self-neglect and domestic violence reports.

History and state of APS in Ohio.

- Mandated function to counties for over 30 years, but state funding stream was removed prior to passage in 1981. Zenith of state funding reached in 1988-1989 biennium as part of the Elder Care Initiative – at just under 3 million per year.
- State funding is no longer significant and was actually eliminated between 2004 and 2009. Local funding is largely from SSBG – an endangered funding source.
- Today, 39 counties lack a full time APS worker.

The cost of doing nothing.

- It can be lethal (3 times the rate of death) and expensive (4 times more likely to go to a nursing home from a hospital) in studies done by Dr. Mark Lachs.
- The fiscal cost of financial exploitation to the individual and society are great, with a significant cost in Utah occurring because 9% of victims were enrolled in Medicaid as a direct result of being exploited. The overall cost to that state is estimated at \$7,704,729 in 2010.

What OCAPS is requesting

- OCAPS is requesting an annual appropriation of \$20 million.
- This funding would allow for a dedicated Adult Protective Services worker in each county in Ohio and additional staff in larger counties as well as adequate emergency funds distributed per capita.