



**pennsylvania**

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE  
OFFICE OF LONG TERM LIVING

## Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

You have the right to be free of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Your health and welfare, no matter which services you receive, must be protected under federal and state law. Below are examples of how to identify abuse, neglect and exploitation.

### **ABUSE**

**Abuse means when someone brings injury, restriction, intimidation, punishment, mental suffering, sexual abuse, or exploitation to you. It is an act that takes away your rights or dignity, or may cause or causes actual physical injury or emotional harm.**

**Here are some of the most frequent types of abuse:**

**Physical abuse** - An act by a person that may cause physical injury (including physical and chemical restraints).

Some examples: Bruises, broken bones or burn marks caused by your spouse or others; being tied to a wheelchair by your caregiver; or feeling overly drowsy or unresponsive when the wrong dose of medications is intentionally given to you.

**Psychological abuse** - An act, other than verbal, that may cause emotional harm, create fear and/or embarrass or intimidate you.

Some examples: A caregiver or personal care worker keeps you isolated from friends and family; a caregiver takes something important away from you.

**Sexual abuse** - An act or attempted act such as rape, incest, sexual exploitation or sexual harassment and/or inappropriate or unwanted touching.

Some examples: You are raped; your neighbor touches you inappropriately; your direct care worker tells you they will quit unless you have sex.

**Verbal abuse** - An act using words to threaten, harass, intimidate, or embarrass you.

Some examples: Your service provider swears at you and calls you names when you don't do things exactly how they want them done; your sibling constantly mocks you to the point of tears; your spouse threatens to hurt you or put you in a nursing facility.

**Other Types of Abuse** - Abuse can also include intentional service interruption and failure to provide medications as prescribed by your physician... if those actions place your health or welfare at risk.



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### **NEGLECT**

**Neglect means someone has failed to provide you with reasonable care, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, personal hygiene, and protection from harm.**

Some examples: You have bedsores because your caregiver doesn't turn you; you are dehydrated because you aren't given water when you need it; you are hungry because your companion doesn't feed you; you have serious health problems because your wife won't take you to the doctor; you have continuous soiled or wet bedding because your direct care worker won't do your laundry.

### **EXPLOITATION**

**Exploitation is when someone deprives, defrauds or otherwise takes your money or personal property in an unfair or cruel way, against your will, or without your consent or knowledge for his or her own benefit.**

Some examples: You notice that money is missing after your direct care worker leaves; a caregiver takes your jewelry; or a family member or neighbor pressures you to change your will or place them as a co-signer on your bank accounts.

If any of the above happens to you, be sure to call and talk with someone listed below!

### **ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION ARE AGAINST THE LAW!**

What do you do if you suspect that you are being abused?

If you are **UNDER 60**:

- Call 911 if your life is in danger
- Call your service coordinator
- Contact the Long-Term Living Participant Helpline at 1-800-757-5042, between 8:00 a.m and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

If you are **OVER 60**:

- Call 911 if your life is in danger
- Call the elder abuse hotline at 1-800-490-8505
- Call your local Area Agency on Aging
- Call your service coordinator
- Contact the Long-Term Living Participant Helpline at 1-800-757-5042, between 8:00 a.m and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday