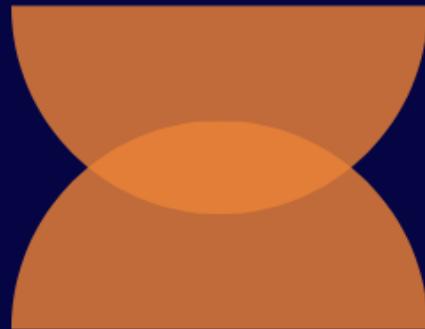


NATIONAL  
ELDER JUSTICE



LAW ENFORCEMENT  
SUMMIT



# LAW ENFORCEMENT BEST PRACTICES & FEDERAL RESOURCES

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
ElderJustice  
INITIATIVE





## BEST PRACTICES

Derek Loeffler

Commander, Education and Training Section  
Compliance Bureau  
Baltimore PD (MD)

## Incorporate Elder Abuse Training Modules into Acadis

The National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL) developed a series of 23 training modules on various aspects of law enforcement investigations into elder abuse.

Baltimore has added the complete NCALL elder abuse series to its internal learning management system, **Acadis**, and 1300 Maryland officers have completed the training.

If your state uses Acadis, you can replicate this approach and use the NCALL training modules that are free of charge.



[Elder Abuse Investigations Training for Law Enforcement and Other Investigators](#)



## BEST PRACTICES

Chief Jeremy Thompson  
Elizabethtown PD (KY)

### 4 Tips from Elizabethtown PD

Some of the best practices our investigators use here locally are:

1. Establish if there are any potential power of attorney documents for the victim.
2. Complete separate interviews for suspect and victim.
3. Determine if cognitive issues exist with the victim.
4. Collaborate with APS to ensure all facts are known about the victim.



## BEST PRACTICES

Anna Thomas, MS Gerontology, CACTS  
Section Manager, Forensic Special Initiatives Unit  
GBI Crimes Against Disabled Adults and Elderly  
(CADE) Task Force  
Georgia Department of Human Services

## Elder Abuse App for Law Enforcement

The Georgia Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation (GANE) App was developed for law enforcement and other professionals who need quick access to tools and resources in the field when responding to crimes involving vulnerable adults. The app allows access to:

- Georgia Law
- Reporting Agencies
- Financial Capacity Screening
- Temporary Emergency Respite Funds



[Georgia Abuse Neglect Exploitation \(GANE\) App](#)



## BEST PRACTICES

Anna Thomas, MS Gerontology, CACTS  
Section Manager, Forensic Special Initiatives Unit  
GBI Crimes Against Disabled Adults and Elderly  
(CADE) Task Force  
Georgia Department of Human Services

## Assessing Financial Capacity in Elder Financial Exploitation Cases

The Division of Aging Services (DAS) collaborated with the Alzheimer's Association and Dr. Daniel Marson from the University of Alabama, Birmingham, to develop comprehensive assessment tools to objectively evaluate an individual's capacity to manage their finances.

These assessment tools were field-tested by Adult Protective Services to determine their effectiveness in providing definitive information about an individual's financial capacity.

Contact Anna Thomas ([anna.thomas1@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:anna.thomas1@dhs.ga.gov)) for more information



## BEST PRACTICES

Anna Thomas, MS Gerontology, CACTS  
Section Manager, Forensic Special Initiatives Unit  
GBI Crimes Against Disabled Adults and Elderly  
(CADE) Task Force  
Georgia Department of Human Services

## Certified At-Risk Adult Crime Tactics Specialist (CACTS) Training

The Division of Aging Services Forensics Special Initiatives Unit (FSIU) in Georgia is currently deploying a comprehensive multidisciplinary training program called the **Certified At-Risk Adult Crime Tactics Specialist (CACTS)** program.

This program is delivered statewide to law enforcement agencies and other organizations involved in investigating abuse, neglect, and exploitation cases. The program features modules covering various topics including Benefits Trafficking, financial exploitation, guardianship, conservatorship, power of attorney, Georgia law, social service and regulatory agencies, and other pertinent areas.

-  [CACTS Program Description](#)
-  [Total Trained CACTS Specialists](#)
-  [Trained CACTS Law Enforcement Specialists](#)



## BEST PRACTICES

Anna Thomas, MS Gerontology, CACTS  
Section Manager, Forensic Special Initiatives Unit  
GBI Crimes Against Disabled Adults and Elderly  
(CADE) Task Force  
Georgia Department of Human Services

## GBI Crimes Against Disabled Adults and Elderly (CADE) Task Force



[PowerPoint Describing the Georgia Model](#)



## BEST PRACTICES

Sgt. Mark L. Patterson/#1383  
Patrol Sergeant  
Lacrosse County Sheriff's Office (WI)

### Develop a Clear Elder Abuse Protocol and Encourage Collaboration

When we are dispatched to an elder abuse or fraud case involving the elderly, the deputy goes to the complainant's location to get the initial information. In an abuse case, the deputy determines if the victim is safe...has a safe pace to go, or if they need medical attention. The deputy would also contact Social Services for any assistance that may be needed for the victim.

Once the deputy has that initial information, and the victim is safe, they will do their report and forward to the investigators. The investigators will take over and schedule interviews with victim and suspect and get the appropriate warrants if necessary. Investigators also send reports to our Aging and Disability Department and inform our district attorneys office. We have ADAs that handle elder abuse cases.

Once it is determined that there is enough evidence for the charges to be filed, our office and DA's office along with Aging Dept. will meet and discuss what is going to happen and what the next steps are. Depending on the victim's understanding of what is taking place, other family members may be involved with the case. We also give the victim and family any information that may help them in this case and resources to help them in the future.



## BEST PRACTICES

Paul J. Melanson  
Chief of Police  
Avon Police Department (CT)

### Focus on Issues Relevant to Your Community

We focus mostly on the Grandparent Scam, where a scammer called to say they were the grandchild of the older person and that they were in trouble and needed money. The scammer would instruct the older victim not to tell anyone and to go to the bank and remove money.

We had Officers go to the various banks to educate the tellers of the scam and advise them of the role they can play in interrupting the crime by informing customers who may fit this scenario.

Learn more about Grandparent scams:

-  ['Grandparent' Scams Get More Sophisticated | Federal Communications Commission \(fcc.gov\)](#)



## BEST PRACTICES

Santa Clara County Law Enforcement  
Ventura County Law Enforcement  
Michigan Elder Abuse Task Force

## Develop Protocols to Investigate Elder Abuse

The development of elder abuse protocols can give law enforcement guidance on investigating abuse, facilitate collaboration, and ensure that cases move smoothly through the system. Below are some examples of protocols that can be adapted for your state or jurisdiction. Examples include:

- 📄 [Ventura County Elder and Dependent Adult Law Enforcement Protocol](#) (Ventura County, 2023)
- 📄 [Michigan Investigative Protocol](#) (Michigan Elder Abuse Task Force)
- 📄 [Michigan Enhanced Multidisciplinary Teams: Community Engagement Protocol](#) (Michigan Elder Abuse Task Force)



# BEST PRACTICES

Michigan Elder Abuse Task Force Subcommittee for  
Training Officers and Prosecutors

## Develop an Investigation Guide

Michigan has created “A Guide to Investigating and Prosecution of Vulnerable Adult Financial Exploitation.” This manual provides detailed guidance on how to effectively gather evidence of financial exploitation of vulnerable and elder adults, what charges and legal issues to consider, and how to present that evidence to a judge and jury.



[A Guide to Investigation and Prosecution of Vulnerable Adult Financial Exploitation](#)



## BEST PRACTICES

Bryan J. Townsend, II  
Senior Assistant Attorney General  
Consumer Protection And Antitrust Bureau  
Elder Abuse And Exploitation Unit  
NH Department Of Justice

### Work Collaboratively with APS

APS workers often have relevant knowledge through prior interactions with alleged victims and perpetrators. Including APS in interviews, and even allowing APS to conduct interviews by themselves, can often be helpful. For instance, APS is required by law to provide the alleged perpetrator with the opportunity to comment on the allegations. Often, we will not join in on this interview with APS. In my experience, alleged perpetrators are more willing to speak candidly (and often inadvertently incriminate themselves) with APS workers, than they are when law enforcement becomes involved and makes its presence known.



## BEST PRACTICES

Bryan J. Townsend, II  
Senior Assistant Attorney General  
Consumer Protection And Antitrust Bureau  
Elder Abuse And Exploitation Unit  
NH Department Of Justice

### Interviewing Victims with Severe Cognitive Impairment

There is often a feeling amongst law enforcement that if a victim has a severe form of dementia or has been deemed legally incapacitated, then there is no reason to interview the victim during the investigation.

In my experience, there can be great value in conducting a recorded interview with these victims, so long as such an interview will not be damaging psychologically to the victim. Often, alleged perpetrators in financial exploitation cases attempt to downplay a victim's cognitive impairment, often claiming that the victim had only mild dementia during the period of charged conduct, or that the victim's deficiencies were not apparent.

Interviewing a victim who has a severe form of dementia within weeks or even months of the alleged unauthorized transactions assist to demonstrate the severity and obviousness of the victim's cognitive limitations. Even though many of these victims will not testify at trial, many of their statements are nonetheless admissible.



## BEST PRACTICES

Mike Austin  
Wisconsin Department of Justice

### Utilize MOUs with APS to Establish Roles and Protocols

Each county in Wisconsin is required by law to have a MOU with law enforcement and the APS unit.



[Wisconsin Sample MOU](#)



## BEST PRACTICES

Mike Austin  
Wisconsin Department of Justice

### Provide Training for New Officers on Identifying and Investigating Elder Abuse

We utilize the NCALL/OVW law 8-hour training course with all new training recruits in the Milwaukee Police Department.

Note. This training is for OVW Grantees



## BEST PRACTICES

Mike Austin  
Wisconsin Department of Justice

### Develop an Elder Abuse Supplemental Incident Report Template

Review the Wisconsin Supplemental Incident Report for ideas on creating your own template.

 [WI Elder Abuse Report Template](#)



## BEST PRACTICES

Mike Austin  
Wisconsin Department of Justice

### Use Investigation Checklists

Investigation checklists are useful supplemental forms to accompany your reports and ensure a thorough investigative practice. Here are 3 examples:

- 📄 [EAGLE: Elder-Abuse-Evidence-Collection-Checklist.pdf](#)
- 📄 [Bank Subpoena checklist](#)
- 📄 [NCALL Financial Exploitation Checklist](#)



# BEST PRACTICES

OJP LIBRARIAN

## Literature Review: Law Enforcement Best Practices

Annotated bibliography of reports and articles on elder justice best practices for law enforcement.



[Literature Review: Law Enforcement Best Practices](#)



## BEST PRACTICES

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO GWEP

### Example of a Web-based Resource Guide

The University of Chicago created a webpage of victim resources that elder justice professionals can access to find help for older victims.



[Chicago South Side Elder Abuse Resource Guide](#)



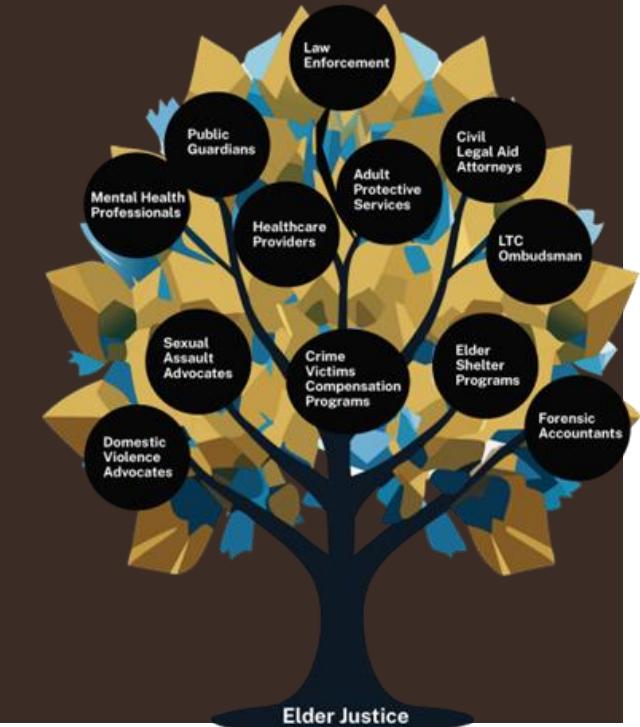
# LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERS

## Adult Protective Services (APS)

APS is a state social service program that takes reports of alleged abuse, neglect/self-neglect, and financial exploitation. APS can assess and determine the needs of the elder abuse victim. Most APS offices can share records and information with law enforcement.



[State APS Hotline Locator](#)



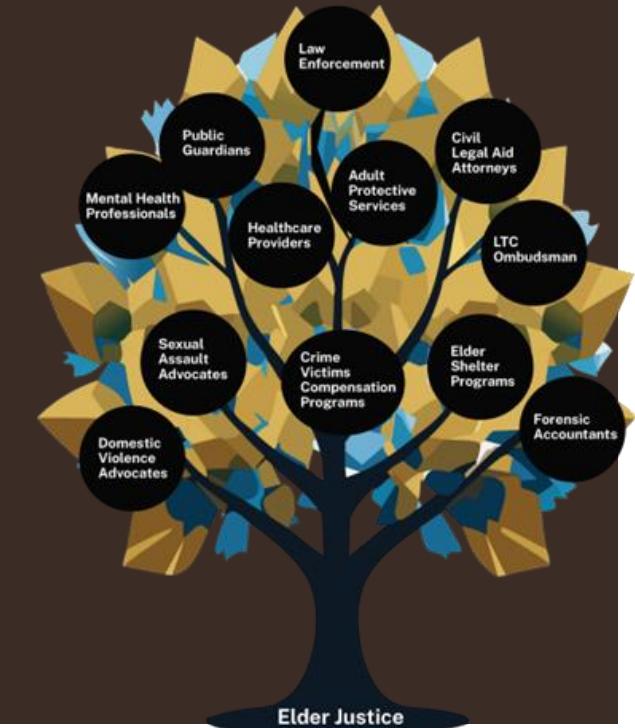


## LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERS

## Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)

AAAs operate in virtually every community in the nation with the mission to help older adults age with independence and dignity at home and in the community through a coordinated system of services and supports. Many AAAs can provide support services to older victims during your investigation.

 [AAA Office Locator](#)





# LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERS

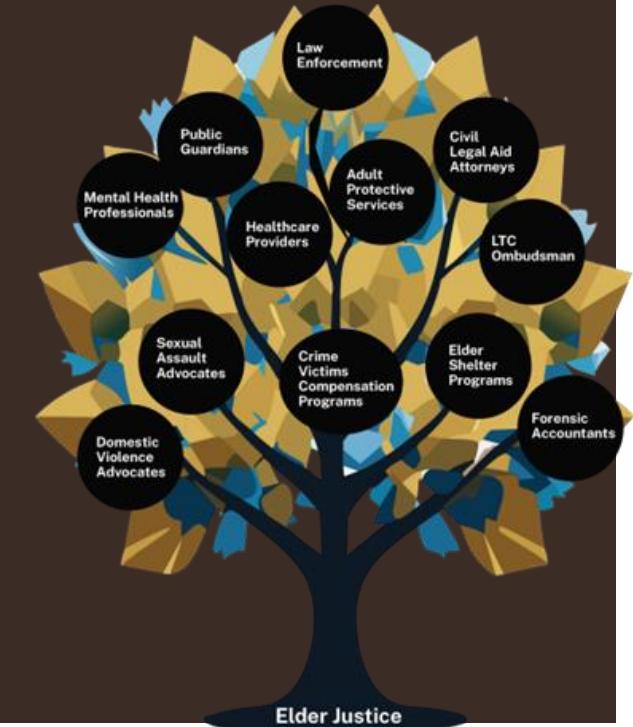
## Legal Aid

Legal aid may provide help in filing for a civil protective order, changing a will, appointing a power of attorney, or other legal matters. You may learn during your investigation that a civil legal matter needs to be resolved. You can refer the older victim to Legal Aid.



### Eldercare Locator

(enter a zip code, then select Legal Aid under Show All)





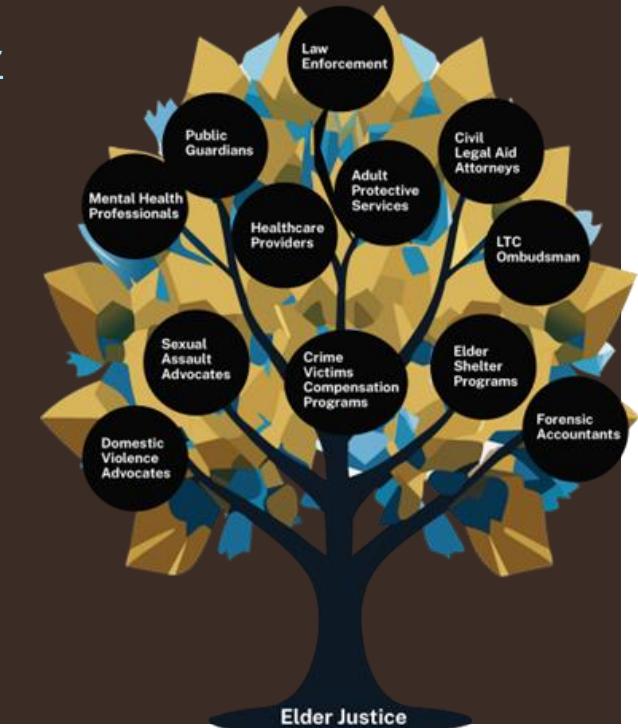
## LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERS

## Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO)

The LTCO advocates for the rights of nursing home or Long-Term Care (LTC) residents (in some states also assisted living facilities). When you receive a report of abuse occurring in a LTC facility, contact the LTCO who may know the resident, and will be familiar with the facility.



[Long-Term Care Ombudsman Locator](#)





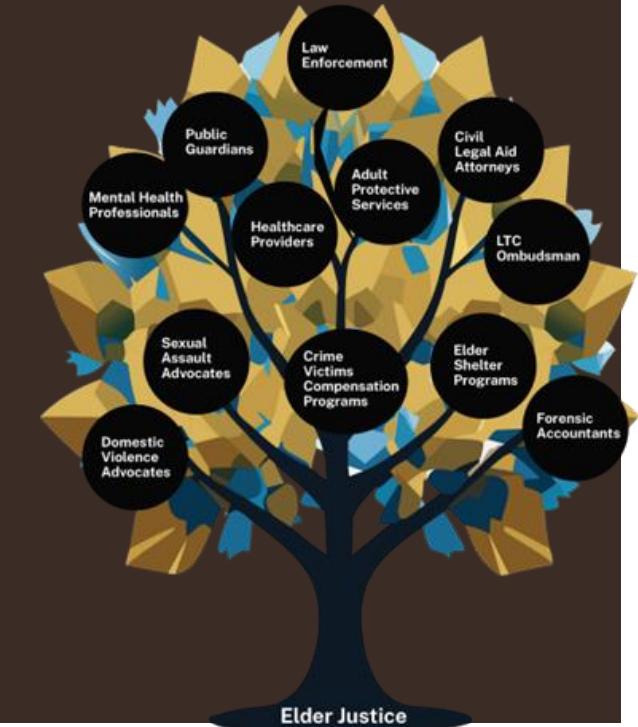
# LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERS

## Multidisciplinary Teams

Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) benefit both victims and law enforcement. Law enforcement can build stronger cases when working with professionals on an MDT, at times expedite investigations, and have a more holistic perspective of the case.



### Elder Justice Networks Locator





# LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES

## EAGLE (Elder Abuse Guide for Law Enforcement)

Web module to support law enforcement in elder abuse and financial exploitation cases. Features include:

- Evidence collection checklist
- Zip Code Resource Locator
- Interview Tips and Educational Videos & Much More



[EAGLE](#)

Screenshot of the EAGLE web module homepage. The header features the EAGLE logo and navigation links for About EAGLE, Contact EAGLE, EAGLE Training Resources, Elder Abuse Overview, State Specific Laws, and Law Enforcement Resources. The main content area features a headline "The tools you need to protect your older adult community." with links to "First Responder Checklist" and "Evidence Collection Checklist". Below this is a "Community Resources" section with a "Enter a Zip Code" search bar. To the right, there is a photograph of a police officer interacting with an elderly man in a home setting.



## LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES

### National Elder & Dependent Adult Abuse Community

The Prosecutor-Investigator Community is formally called The National Elder & Dependent Adult Abuse Community, an online forum hosted by the California District Attorneys Association (CDAA) on its Sidebars platform, where prosecutors and investigators from across the country can come together and collaborate on issues involving elder abuse prosecution.



[Learn How to Join](#)



# LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES

## Roll Call Videos

*Identifying and Responding to Elder Abuse: An Officer's Role* is a series of six roll call videos designed for patrol officers to quickly recognize and respond to various types of elder abuse. Titles include:

- Financial Abuse by a Stranger
- False Imprisonment
- Financial Exploitation by a Family Member
- Physical Abuse
- Neglect (2 Cases)
- Understanding Elder Abuse



[Roll Call Videos](#)



## LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES

### **SAFTA (Senior Abuse Financial Tracking and Accounting) Toolkit**

Guided by the adage “A picture is worth a 1000 words”, the Senior Abuse Financial Tracking and Accounting (SAFTA) tool provides elder justice professionals with a simplified forensic instrument for illuminating suspicious financial patterns and facilitating the prosecution of suspected elder financial exploitation.



[SAFTA Toolkit](#)



## LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES

### Law Enforcement Resource Guide

*The Law Enforcement Elder Justice Resource Guide* is a compilation of the Department's elder justice resources for law enforcement, and we hope a meaningful contribution to our collective effort to promote justice for older Americans.



[Law Enforcement Elder Justice Resource Guide](#) (EJI, COPS Office)



## LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES

### **SAFE (Safe Accessible Forensic Interviewing for Elders) Training**

SAFE Training was developed to meet the growing need for trauma-informed, victim-centered interviewing techniques for use with older adults in criminal contexts. For more information on receiving the training in your community, contact [elder.justice@usdoj.gov](mailto:elder.justice@usdoj.gov)



[SAFE Training Curriculum](#)



## LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES

### Elder Abuse: The Rural Response Training Materials

The purpose of this curriculum is to provide law enforcement with information and strategies to improve response to and investigation of all types of elder abuse cases occurring in rural communities. Additionally, law enforcement is encouraged to utilize the handbook in the field to assist with investigations and to provide access to resources. Readers will be able to:

- Recognize the unique factors present when responding to and investigating elder abuse in rural jurisdictions
- Identify the various forms of elder abuse
- Describe unique factors that influence elder abuse investigations
- Increase victim safety and hold perpetrators more accountable by conducting effective elder abuse investigations



[PowerPoint](#)



[Handbook](#)



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

# Fraud Reporting and Victim Services



## National Elder Fraud Hotline (OVC)



## Find Services for Older Victims

- Eldercare Locator



## FBI's IC3 Recovery Asset Team



- File a Complaint with IC3
- Elder Fraud Reporting to IC3 PSA (2 min)



## Federal Trade Commission



- Report Fraud



## U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission

- Spotting and Reporting Investment Scams Targeting Older Investors



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

### Finding Help for Veterans

During your initial contact with an older victim, ask if this person has served in the military, and if so, offer assistance in locating veteran resources.

- Locate [VA Healthcare](#)
- Social Work Program: Reach out to a [local VA Medical Center](#) and ask to speak to the Social Work Chief
- Comprehensive Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Services, dial 988 then Press 1



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

### Public Outreach Materials

-  [Emerging Threat: Artificial Intelligence Flyer \(US Senate Special Committee on Aging\)](#)
-  [Prevent Abuse of Older Veterans Flyer \(VA\)](#)
-  [List of Resources \(Order and download publications for free\) \(CFPB\)](#)
-  [Scam Prevention Resources \(SSA\)](#)
-  [Scam Prevention Resources \(scroll to Handouts\) \(USPIS\)](#)
-  [Five Red Flags of Investment Fraud \(SEC\)](#)
-  [Investor.gov/NeverStopLearning \(SEC\)](#)
-  [Planning for Diminished Capacity and Illness \(SEC\)](#)
-  [HoweyTrade Investment Program \(SEC\)](#)



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

### Working with Financial Institutions

[Memorandum on Financial Institution and Law Enforcement Efforts to Combat Elder Financial Exploitation \(CFPB\)](#)

[Advisory on Elder Financial Exploitation \(CFPB\)](#)

[Recovering from Elder Financial Exploitation: A Framework for Policy and Research \(CFPB\)](#)

[Suspicious Activity Reports on Elder Financial Exploitation: Issues and Trends \(CFPB\)](#)



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

# Working with Adult Protective Services

Understanding and Working with Adult Protective Services (APS)  
Part I: Overview of APS Programs (ACL)

Understanding and Working with Adult Protective Services Part II:  
The Reporting and Investigation of Alleged Abuse (ACL)

Understanding and Working with Adult Protective Services Part  
III: Intervention Collaboration (ACL)



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

### Webinars and Online Training

-  [APS Technical Assistance Resource Center Webinars](#) (ACL-funded APS TARC)
-  [Elder Justice Law Enforcement Webinars](#) (EJI)
-  [Modern Scams: How Scammers are Using Artificial Intelligence & How We Can Fight Back](#)  
(Recorded Senate Hearing) (US Senate Special Committee on Aging)
-  [Polyvictimization in Later Life Online Training](#) (OVC)
-  [Online Dementia Training for First Responders](#)  
(University of Arkansas GWEPP; HRSA)



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

### Learn More

[Response to Elder Abuse: A Self-Assessment Workbook for Law Enforcement \(OVW\)](#)

[Tips and Tools for Providing Culturally Competent and Responsive Care to Older People who Experience Abuse \(ACL\)](#)

[Issue Brief: Anatomy of a Guardianship: Case Study and Red Flags for Abuse \(ACL\)](#)



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

### Elder Justice Websites

[Elder Justice Training Portal](#) (COPS Office)

[Law Enforcement Webpage](#) (EJI)

[Law Enforcement](#) (OVW-funded NCALL)

[National Center for State and Tribal Elder Justice Coalitions](#) (OVC-Funded)

[National Center on Elder Abuse](#) (ACL-funded)

[Elder Justice](#) (ACL)

[Guardianship](#) (EJI)



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

## Funding Opportunity

OVW Fiscal Year 2024 Training and Services to End Abuse in Later Life Program – Solicitation, scheduled for release in spring 2024 (see [2023 solicitation](#))



## FEDERAL RESOURCES

## Agency Acronyms

ACL – Administration for Community Living, US HHS

CFPB – Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

COPS Office – Office of Community Oriented Policing Services,  
US DOJ

EJI – Elder Justice Initiative, US DOJ

HRSA – Health Resources and Services Administration, US HHS  
(GWEP: Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program)

IC3 - Internet Crime Complaint Center, FBI, US DOJ

OVC – Office for Victims of Crime, US DOJ

OVW – Office on Violence Against Women, US DOJ  
(NCALL: National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life)

SEC – U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission

SSA – Social Security Administration

USPIS – US Postal Inspection Service

VA – Veterans Affairs