

-----A Special Note-----

The average age of our population continues to rise and the percentage of Americans aged 65+ has more than tripled since the early 1990s. Elder abuse has become a national epidemic. There are some 40,000 cases of elder abuse that occur in the State of Indiana every year and it is estimated only 1 in 14 cases are reported to authorities.

Elder abuse happens everywhere. It is a problem that has no demographic boundaries. Abuse of endangered adults cannot be considered someone else's problem. All senior citizens, caregivers and adult children who have aging parents must be aware of the help that is available.

Unit 3 is located in the Allen County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. If you or someone you love is being abused or neglected, please contact our office. Don't make excuses or look the other way. If you suspect something is wrong, it probably is and your call could make a difference.

Karen E. Richards  
Prosecuting Attorney  
38<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit

## GOAL

The goal of the Adult Protective Services staff is to help seniors and/or vulnerable adults to live as independently as possible in the least restrictive environment, free from physical, emotional and financial abuse or the threat of abuse.

Unit 3 serves these Indiana counties:

- Adams
- Allen
- DeKalb
- Huntington
- LaGrange
- Noble
- Steuben
- Wells
- Whitley

**Make reports to the nearest  
law enforcement agency or  
call the APS Hotline at  
1-800-992-6978**

# Adult Protective Services Unit 3

Serving Adams, Allen, DeKalb,  
Huntington, LaGrange, Noble,  
Steuben, Wells and Whitley County



**APS Hotline 1-800-992-6978  
260-449-7989  
602 South Calhoun Street  
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802  
Fax 260-449-4618**

## **What is an Adult Protective Services Unit?**

In 1985, Adult Protective Services (APS) units were established throughout Indiana to investigate reports of abuse such as battery, neglect, self-neglect, financial or sexual exploitation and to assist in obtaining services for endangered adults.

### **What is an endangered adult?**

As defined by Indiana Statute, any individual over 18 years of age who is incapable by reason of mental incapacity of managing or directing the management of his/her property or directing the provision of self-care for himself/ herself or both, and is harmed or threatened with harm as a result of battery, neglect or exploitation of the person's personal services, property or both.

### **What kinds of things can APS do to help?**

The Investigator will receive and investigate reports of abuse and will assist in utilizing available legal, medical, psychiatric, residential and social services that are necessary to protect the health and safety of an endangered adult. The Investigator will also assist in obtaining protective services for the endangered adult when appropriately indicated.

## **Am I required to report suspected abuse?**

An individual who believes or has reason to believe that an individual is an endangered adult and is the victim of battery, neglect or exploitation is required by law to make a report to APS, law enforcement or the Hotline. This includes any member of the staff of a medical or other public or private institution. Failure to report is a Class B Misdemeanor punishable by up to 180 days in jail or a \$1,000 fine.

### **What information do I report?**

The name, age & address of the endangered adult. The same information is needed of family members or other persons financially responsible for the endangered adult's care or other individuals who may be able to provide relevant information. Report the apparent nature and extent of the alleged battery, neglect or exploitation and the endangered adult's physical and mental condition. Also include the name, address and telephone of the reporter and the basis of the reporter's knowledge and any other relevant information regarding the circumstances of the endangered adult.

**ALL REPORTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL!**

## **What are the "red flags" or common signs of abuse?**

Obvious physical injuries, bruises or untreated medical problems. Signs of neglect include poor hygiene, malnutrition, withdrawal from society, extreme isolation, frequent hospital visits, misuse of alcohol or drugs by the caregiver or the victim, reluctance or refusal to explain injuries by the victim or caregiver, conflict in caregiver's report of an accident, unusual fear or defensiveness of the older adult in the presence of a caregiver, a history of abuse in the family, situations that would cause a caregiver extreme stress, changes in financial management routines such as other people accessing bank accounts or cashing checks, or changes in living conditions. Victim's reports of mistreatment should always be taken seriously; they may be an accurate portrayal of what they are experiencing or they might be symptoms of delusions.

**A person who, in good faith, makes a report or testifies at administrative or judicial proceedings on matters arising from the report is immune from both criminal and civil liability for doing so and an employer may not reduce benefits or otherwise retaliate against them.**