

**We work to educate the public and other agencies about the signs of adult abuse, including physical injury, sexual abuse, poor nutrition, dehydration, untreated medical conditions, misuse of medicines, abandonment or general neglect and financial abuse.**



**T**he County of Ventura Human Services Agency provides public services that promote self sufficiency and health and well-being. Our services help ensure the protection of children, the elderly and dependent adults, and provide a safety net for individuals and families who need assistance with basic necessities, such as food, housing and health care. Additionally, we help people secure employment through education, training, job search skills and job placement.

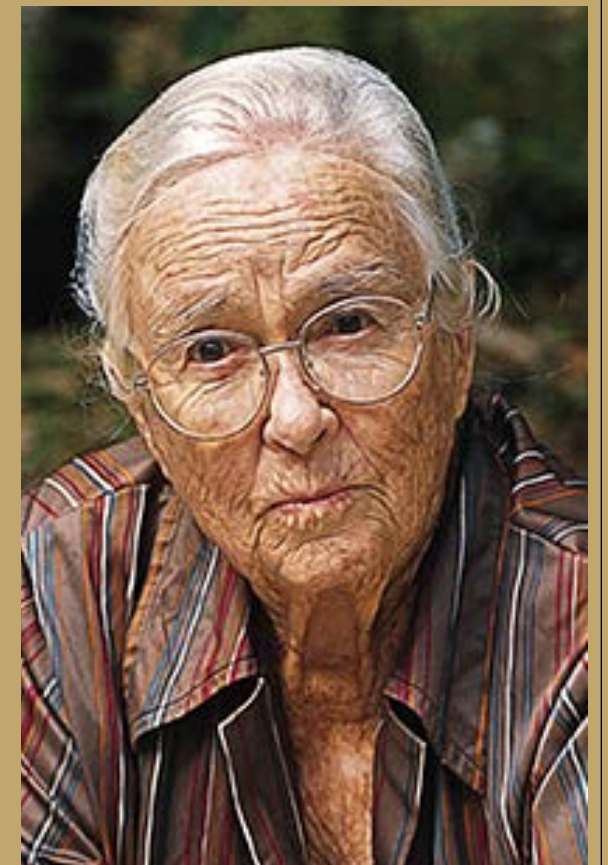
To confidentially report suspected elder or dependent adult abuse or neglect, contact the Child & Elder Abuse 24-Hour Hotline at 805-654-3200.



Call 2-1-1 to learn about resources in your community



# Adult Protective Services



Safety and well-being for elderly and dependent adults



Toll-Free: 866-904-9362  
[www.vchsa.org](http://www.vchsa.org)



## Providing Support

Each year, more than 3,000 elderly and dependent adults are provided support so that they can live in a comfortable and caring environment, free from abuse, neglect and financial mistreatment.



### Achieving independence

*The Human Services Agency is here to help*

The Human Services Agency facilitates the state-mandated Adult Protective Services program to ensure that people with limited abilities are able to protect themselves from outside interests, including abusive friends, relatives, strangers, and caregivers. Our bilingual staff provides services at no cost to clients including investigating allegations of abuse and neglect, assessing client needs, providing short-term case management, and providing linkage to services. Our clients have the right to refuse assistance.

Our goal is to provide a pathway to the client's current and future safety, enlist the support of families and other support services, educate the community regarding the identification and prevention of abuse, and advocate for elderly and dependent adults through government legislation.

### Ensuring safety

*Connecting those at risk with assistance*

When we receive a referral from someone who suspects adult abuse or neglect, we complete an assessment to determine

whether or not there is a protective issue involved. When a protective issue is identified, the social worker visits the client to discuss the issue at hand, as well as recommend other services that may be helpful. Once the client agrees to receive assistance, we link with Aging Network partners, including:

- Area Agency on Aging
- Ventura County District Attorney's Office
- County of Ventura Public Health Department
- County of Ventura Behavioral Health Department
- Public Guardian
- Tri-Counties Regional Center
- Other Human Services Agency programs
- Various hospitals and other private providers
- Community-based organizations

With the client's consent, we work to stabilize their situation and ensure protection through information, linkage to resources, short-term case management, counseling and when needed, emergency shelter.

Our goal is to provide a pathway to the client's current and future safety, enlist the support of families, educate the community, and advocate for elderly and dependent adults through government legislation.

### Knowledge is power

*Knowing the signs of adult abuse*

The signs of abuse can be difficult to ascertain. Adult abuse can continue unseen for years or be a sudden attack from a trusted friend, family member, or caregiver. Sometimes a client needs help because of self-neglect due to a decline in cognitive capacity.

We work to educate the public and other agencies about the signs of adult abuse:

- Neglect by Self or Others: inadequate food, malnourishment, dehydration, untreated medical conditions, misuse of medication and unsafe housing
- Financial Indicators: misuse of funds, unusual bank account activity, checks cashed by others, suspicious changes in ownership, unauthorized account changes and real estate transactions, unpaid bills and missing belongings
- Mental Suffering: fear, agitation, confusion, severe depression, or other forms of serious emotional distress that is brought about by threats, harassment or other forms of intimidating behavior
- Physical Injuries: cuts, bruises, burns, unexplained injuries, physical restraints, evidence of sexual abuse and deprivation of food and water
- Untreated Medical Conditions: lingering illnesses, ignored injuries or general decline in health
- Isolation: prevention of receipt of mail, phone calls, visitors or contact with other concerned persons
- Abandonment: being left alone and unable to provide the basic necessities of daily living

Emotional and financial abuse may offer fewer visual clues, so these forms of abuse often are more difficult to identify. Emotional abuse may be carried out through threats that cause fear, anxiety, or depression. Financial abuse can be accomplished through scams including but not limited to the IRS scam, romance scam, and the Grandparent scam where clients are asked to make a payment through prepaid gift cards or pay fees for prizes and/or foreign lotteries.

### Advocates for our community

*Requirements for mandated reporting*

To ensure that all of our community members are safe, everyone must be responsible for reporting suspected abuse. Additionally, anyone who has full- or part-time custody or care of an elderly or dependent adult is required to serve as a mandated reporter and immediately report suspected abuse or neglect. Other professionals required to report abuse include social workers, members of the clergy, health care practitioners, financial institutions, advocacy groups and fire department personnel. The identity of a person who makes an abuse report is kept confidential and cannot be released.

For more information about the Human Services Agency's Adult Protective Services program, call 866-904-9362 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. To confidentially report adult abuse, call the Child & Elder Abuse 24-Hour Hotline at 805-654-3200.