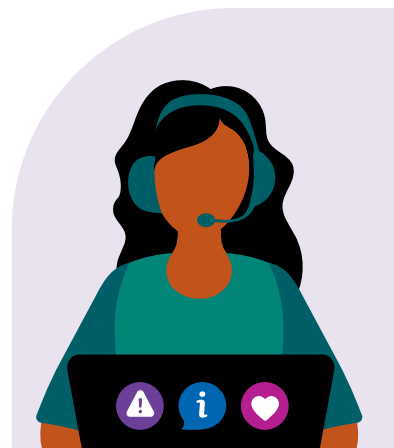


## FIELD FAQs

# Mandated Reporting of Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse



### Q What is mandated reporting?

In nearly every state there are certain professionals who are legally required to report known or suspected elder and vulnerable adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation to authorities. These individuals are called mandated reporters.

### Q Who is a mandated reporter?

Mandated reporting laws vary widely by state. Depending on the jurisdiction, mandated reporters may include healthcare professionals, caregivers, clergy, financial institutions, and law enforcement, among others. Several states have universal statutory reporting requirements which means that any individual with knowledge of known or suspected abuse is required to make a report.

*You do not need to be a mandated reporter to report known or suspected abuse. Anyone can report, and in some states these reports can be made anonymously.*

### Q What types of abuse should be reported?

State law governs the types of abuse that must be reported. Commonly reported types of abuse include physical, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse, neglect, and self-neglect.

### Q How do I report abuse?

Reports are often made by phone, although some states have online methods of accepting reports. Check your state's preferred methods for reporting.

### Q What information will I be asked to provide as a mandated reporter?

Reporting requirements vary by state, but agencies often request information about the suspected victim, alleged perpetrator, current location of the suspected victim, and the specific allegation or concern.

### Q What is the time frame for reporting abuse?

Time frames for reporting abuse may vary by the type of abuse, the site of the occurrence, and urgency of the incident. Refer to your state's statutes for additional information.

### Q What happens after I report abuse?

After a report is made, the reporting agency will determine if the report meets state definitions and eligibility criteria for investigation.

Reports that do not meet criteria are referred to other agencies for assistance. In most cases, reporters will not receive an update on the status of the report. Allegations regarding abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an older or vulnerable adult are held in strict confidence by reporting authorities. Confidential information will typically not be disclosed without a court order or a release.

### Q Are there penalties for not reporting?

Mandated Reporters who fail to report known or suspected abuse may be subject to criminal penalties and, in some states, civil liability.

*Reporters who file reports in good faith will not be penalized.*

### Q As a mandated reporter, how do I report suspected abuse?

If you believe that the suspected victim is in immediate danger, contact your local Law Enforcement Agency or 9-1-1. Reports of abuse within the community should be made to Adult Protective Services (APS), the social services agency charged with investigating allegations of mistreatment. In some states, abuse within long-term care facilities should be reported to APS. In other states, facility complaints may be made to state licensing agencies.

## RESOURCES

For more information about mandatory reporting in your state, please access the following resources:

[NCEA | Suspect Abuse?](#)

[Elder Abuse Guide for Law Enforcement](#) – State Statutes

[National Adult Protective Services Association](#)

[National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-term Care](#)

[Eldercare Locator](#)



**NCEA**  
National Center on Elder Abuse

Keck School of  
Medicine of **USC**

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