

# Adult Protective Services



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH &  
SENIOR SERVICES**

## WHAT IS **Adult Protective Services (APS)**?

APS is a social services program focused on helping elderly adults and adults with disabilities live with dignity and respect by investigating allegations of abuse, neglect, self-neglect and exploitation.

## WHO CAN **APS serve**?

- In Missouri, an elderly adult or adult with disabilities must meet all of these criteria:
- 18-59 years old with a disability or 60 and over.
- Unable to protect his/her own interests or meet his/her essential needs.
- Lives in the community or a facility and is currently located in Missouri.

## HOW DO YOU DEFINE **abuse, neglect, self-neglect and exploitation**?

Below are some common definitions. Please check [health.mo.gov/abuse](http://health.mo.gov/abuse) for more information.

Abuse 	Neglect 	Self-Neglect 	Exploitation 
Abuse comes in physical, mental, or sexual forms and can have physical or emotional signs.	Neglect is when a primary caregiver fails to provide adequate assistance that the individual depends on—such as food, clothing, shelter, or necessary medical care.	Self-Neglect is a non-purposeful act of an individual failing to meet their own essential physical, psychological, or social needs, which threatens their health, safety, and well-being.	Exploitation is when someone takes advantage of the individual for personal benefit by either financial or legal means.

## WHO ARE **mandated reporters**?

In most states, including Missouri, there are “mandatory reporter” statutes applying to persons providing services to seniors or adults with disabilities. Some examples are:

- Healthcare, medical or dental service providers
- Emergency response service providers
- Financial services providers
- Law enforcement personnel
- Mental health providers
- Social service agencies



WHY ARE **mandated reporters required to report?**

Mandated reporters, together with APS, play an important role in helping seniors and adults with disabilities live lives free of abuse and neglect. For that reason, mandated reporters are required to report incidents to APS, and there may be legal repercussions for failing to report suspected incidents of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation.

HOW DO YOU **report to APS?**

- Contact APS using the information found on this document.
- Be prepared to provide the following information:
  - The individual's name, address, age/DOB, or other identifying info.
  - Why they are at risk for abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation.
  - Descriptions of the situation, any important identifiers of the alleged abuser, or other dangers in their home environment.

Note that you can make this report anonymously if you so choose.

WHAT HAPPENS **after reporting?**

APS will investigate the suspected abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation, and connect the individual with support services if the individual wishes to receive them.

We understand that every adult individual has the right to self-determination; APS cannot force anyone to accept help (except in a limited set of circumstances) if they do not wish to receive it. APS does not have authority over facilities. We also cannot control whether or not law enforcement opens an investigation. Due to the confidential nature of APS investigations, we may not be able to provide you with the details of the investigation.

WHAT IF **I'm not sure?**

Do you just have a “feeling” about a situation but can’t verify the details? APS professionals are trained to handle these types of situations. Based on your report, the agency will assess the situation and determine how best to respond. Your local APS agency can determine the best course of action in any given situation.



<b>Contact APS</b> 	<b>Hours</b> 
Call 1-800-392-0210	Monday-Sunday
Visit <a href="https://health.mo.gov/abuse">health.mo.gov/abuse</a> or make a report online	7 a.m.- 8 p.m.

