

Los Angeles County Employees
Retirement Association

L.A. CERA

PROTECTING ELDERS AGAINST ABUSE

It's Up to All of Us

MONITOR | IDENTIFY | REPORT

Elder abuse is a serious issue that affects millions of older adults in the U.S. Studies find that an estimated 10 percent of older adults living at home and 16 percent of those living in care facilities experience elder abuse annually. Elder abuse can result in lasting physical and psychological harm, social disconnection, financial loss, and premature death.

LACERA cares deeply about the well-being of our retired members, and protecting them from various forms of exploitation is a key part of our mission. Collectively, we can help stop elder abuse by maintaining awareness and taking appropriate action when needed.



“50 to 60 percent of elder abuse is conducted by a spouse or adult child.”



Here are some tips on how to protect our older friends and relatives, whether they live at home or in a care facility.



Conduct regular check-ins. Staying in touch is beneficial for your loved one's mental health, and it helps you detect anything unusual. Encourage them to share their experiences and feelings, and get to know their caregiver(s).

Since older adults are frequent targets of fraud, educate them about common identity theft scams, reminding them to never provide their personal information to someone who emails or calls claiming to be from Social Security, the IRS, or “tech support.”



Establish a network. Enlist trusted family members, friends, neighbors, caregivers, or other professionals (maybe a family attorney or accountant), asking them to be alert to signs of elder abuse. Given that 50 to 60 percent of elder abuse is conducted by a spouse or adult child, it is crucial to involve multiple individuals in the care and oversight of older adults.



Look for changes in behavior, physical appearance, and living conditions. You can **identify possible abuse** by the following signs.

- ➔ **Physical abuse:** Unexplained bruises, cuts, or injuries
- ➔ **Emotional abuse:** Withdrawal, depression, or anxiety
- ➔ **Neglect:** Poor hygiene, malnutrition, or unsafe living conditions
- ➔ **Financial abuse:** Sudden changes in financial status or missing belongings



Document any incidents. Keep detailed records of any signs or incidents of abuse to share with authorities.



CALL ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES



Report suspected abuse immediately.

- ➔ In California, call Adult Protective Services 24/7 at 833-401-0832. Each county has its own investigative APS agency.
- ➔ In L.A. County, you can call the APS Elder Abuse hotline directly at 877-477-3646.
- ➔ For seniors in long-term care facilities, call the California state ombudsman CRISISline at 800-231-4024.
- ➔ For financial abuse, call the National Elder Fraud Hotline at 833-FRAUD-11 (833-372-8311).
- ➔ If you believe a LACERA member is being financially exploited, contact LACERA at 800-786-6464 for referral to our Benefits Protection Unit.



Seek support and stay involved. Reach out to organizations that provide support and resources for elder abuse victims and continue to advocate on your loved one's behalf.

RESOURCES



California Adult Protective Services,
www.cdss.ca.gov/adult-protective-services

California Department of Aging,
www.aging.ca.gov

L.A. County Aging and Disabilities
Department, [www.ad.lacounty.gov/
services/older-adult-services](http://www.ad.lacounty.gov/services/older-adult-services)

Elder Justice Initiative, www.justice.gov/elderjustice/about-elder-abuse



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