



News Release

Timothy Jeffries, Director

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Adult Protective Services helps keep vulnerable Arizonans from harm

PHOENIX – Imagine someone you know is in danger. Whether that’s a family member, an aunt, uncle, cousin or even a neighbor, would you know what to do or who to call? Adult Protective Services can help. Every year in Arizona, DES receives thousands of reports alleging that a vulnerable adult (*people 18 years of age and older*) are the victims of neglect, abuse or exploitation. During state fiscal year 2015, Arizona Adult Protective Services (APS) received nearly 13,800 reports of adult abuse, neglect and exploitation.

“Although most of us cannot fathom doing harm to a vulnerable individual, there are those unscrupulous members of our society who do seek to harm these beautiful individuals,” said Director Timothy Jeffries. “Our role at DES, and particularly in our Adult Protective Services Division, is to join with law enforcement, the courts and our community-based providers to ensure we do all we can to protect against perpetrators as well as those who self-neglect.”

Neighbors, family members and caregivers play a critical role. By reporting self-neglect, mistreatment and abuse to APS, we can join together to show support and potentially prevent harm. The most common of these allegations involve self-neglect situations where the adult’s safety or well-being is being compromised by their inability to take care of their basic needs, their medical needs, their finances, their home environment or their personal hygiene.

There are many ways to make a report if you feel someone is in need. Reports can be made by phone by calling toll-free: 1-877-SOS ADULT (1-877-767-2385) Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. *Individuals with hearing disabilities can use the telecommunications device for the deaf: (TDD): 1-877-815-8390.* Trained staff are able to take anonymous reports over the telephone.

Also, reports can be made online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at <https://www.azdes.gov/reportadultabuse/>. For emergency situations, call 9-1-1 immediately. The APS Intake Form can also be downloaded in English or Spanish and faxed to (602) 277-4984.

It’s extremely important to note that APS workers have limited authority in dealing with vulnerable adults ages 18 years and over. APS cannot do the following:

- Remove an adult from their home against their wishes;
- Prevent an adult with capacity from using financial resources;

- Serve as a guardian or conservator, or manage the adult's finances;
- Make a determination of capacity. This decision can only be made by the Superior Court.
- Update the person who made the report on the investigation status. APS report information is confidential and can only be released under the exceptions provided under A.R.S. 41-1959.

In order to open an APS investigation, the following information is required:

- Victim's name, address, DOB, phone number
- Description of the problem, including physical limitations and safety concerns
- Alleged perpetrator's name/address/phone number
- Police report numbers, if available
- Victim's current location

To learn more about APS' authority, to make a report or for additional program information, please go to <https://www.azdes.gov/reportadultabuse/>.

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