

# ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES: FROM START TO FINISH

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# ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

"Adult Protective Services are those services provided to older people who are, or are in danger of being mistreated or neglected, if they are unable to protect themselves and have no one to assist them."<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> A National Association of Adult Protective Services Administrators (NAPSA) consensus statement

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## When to call?

The law requires that mandated reporters...  
(ORC 5101.61)

"having reasonable cause to believe that an adult is being abused, neglected, or exploited, or is in a condition which is the result of abuse, neglect, or exploitation; shall immediately report such belief to the county department of job and family services."



**ABUSE**



**NEGLECT**



**EXPLOITATION**

Of **vulnerable adults 60 or older** residing **in the community**

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## Reporting Process

- ▶ Phone or online reporting system are the primary options. Some counties may also accept emailed reports.
  - ▶ **Phone:** google the county, Ohio, and "Adult Protective Services" for a local contact number.
  - ▶ **Online reporting system:** <https://aps.ifs.ohio.gov/>
  - ▶ **Email:** check with your county APS contacts
  - ▶ **PROVIDE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE!**
    - Referral sources sometimes provide limited information which makes justifying an investigation harder.

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## WHAT to report?

This will vary depending on the case and the information you actually have, but some basics:

- ▶ **Accurate demo info:** name, current location, phone #, DOB.
- ▶ **Information on involved parties, including:** perpetrators, caregivers, supports, guardian or POA, household members.
- ▶ **The reasons** you suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation
- ▶ How the maltreatment **impacts the health, safety, welfare, rights, or quality of life of the older adult;**
- ▶ Information regarding **any previous suspected incidents** of abuse, neglect or exploitation, if known

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## Screening & Referrals

- ▶ **Screening:** After a report is made, it is screened... this means we determine whether or not the report meets the criteria for a formal investigation or not.
- ▶ **Information & Referral:** If a report is not investigated, we may have information, referrals or suggestions for the caller.
- ▶ **Cross-Referrals:** Some reports APS will make cross-referrals, for example:
  - ▶ **Children Services** if kids are involved
  - ▶ **Ombudsman** if the person is in a facility for LTC
  - ▶ **Dept of Developmental Disabilities** if appropriate.
  - ▶ **Mental Health** (Crisis Response or other services)

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### If a report is opened...

- ▶ If a report is opened for investigation, this is typically initiated within 3 work days. Emergencies will get quicker response, but the shortest deadline APS has is 24 hours.
- ▶ Ideally APS should have contact back with the Referral Source during their investigation.

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### Do I have the right to any updates?

- ▶ ORC in Ohio says that the County APS **MAY** (not required to but the law permits APS to) release to referral sources our screening decision. APS is **PERMITTED to tell a referral source if a report was screened in or out.** We suggest that the actual person who calls makes the inquiry, not a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.
- ▶ Otherwise, APS case information that we can share with referral sources and other parties is usually limited and related to the role of the party in the client's life.

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### Will the client know I called?

- ▶ In Ohio, it is NOT permissible for APS to tell a client (or others) who called to make a report, UNLESS:
  - ▶ APS has WRITTEN PERMISSION from the referral source to disclose their identity to the client.
  - OR
  - ▶ There are concerns of a criminal nature, in which case APS is permitted to release the caller's name and contact information to police or prosecutor.

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### APS Principles

- ▶ APS clients have:
  - ▶ The right to be safe... & the right to accept or refuse services
  - ▶ The right to make decisions that do not conform with societal norms, if these decisions do not harm others
  - ▶ Their Civil Rights – and are presumed to have decision making capacity until a court adjudicates otherwise
  - ▶ The right to keep personal information confidential

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### APS Principles

APS will:

- ▶ Put clients first!
- ▶ Avoid imposing personal values on others and recognize individual differences
- ▶ Involve the adult to the greatest extent possible in developing their service plan:
  - ▶ Seek informed consent from the client
  - ▶ Provide information on options in a form or manner that they can understand
  - ▶ Maximize the adult's independence – the goal is the least restrictive alternative - Avoid placement when feasible!
- ▶ Do no harm. Inadequate or inappropriate intervention may be worse than no intervention

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### Common APS Interventions

- ▶ **FACILITATING SERVICES:** Encouraging services, making referrals and mediating problems
 



- ▶ **COMMUNICATION LINK:** Advocating for the client by communicating with others
 




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## Common APS Interventions

- ▶ **REUNITING FAMILIES:** Preserving/reuniting families, in the interest of the elder




- ▶ **COURT INTERVENTION:** Last resort when less restrictive means are not sufficient; support from County Prosecutor's Office with court cases




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## APS Reports are more helpful if...

The caller was able to help identify:

1. A reasonable concern of Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation or Self-Neglect
2. An identifiable impairment that makes the client less capable of protecting themselves.

\*The more impaired the client is, or the more "at risk" they are, the more likely it is that an APS case will open.

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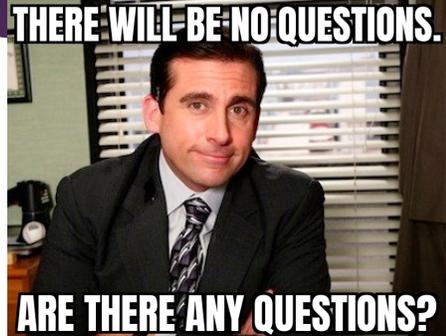
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## Reasons APS May Not Open Case

- ▶ Concern is valid, but too mild or not truly an APS maltreatment
- ▶ The client's impairments are not stated or are mild.
- ▶ A trusted, capable support exists that can provide the same assistance APS typically would
- ▶ Client may not currently be residing in the community (long-term care facility)

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