



KERN COUNTY ELDER NEWS

Kern County DEAR/EDRT TEAM

(Dependent/Elder Abuse Review) Team/EDRT (Elder Death Review Team)

Monthly Information Article

September 2022

WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

By Leslie Devitt

Kern County District Attorney's Office



Agency Partners

Bakersfield Police Department

California Dept. of Insurance



CSUB

Dept. of Social Services Licensing

GBLA

Independent Living Center of KC

Kaiser Permanente

Kern Co. Aging & Adult

Kern Co. BHRS



Kern Co. Coroner

Kern Co. District Attorney

Kern Co. DA Victim Services

Kern Co. Family Law Facilitator

Kern Co. Public Health

Kern Regional Center

Kern Co. Sheriff's Office

Kern Co. Veterans Service Dept.

Social Security Admin.

Strata Credit Union



Anyone can be a victim of crime, but older people, especially those with physical or mental disabilities, are especially vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Many elderly people are isolated, and often the abuser is someone they trust, such as a relative, friend, caretaker or service provider. This can make it harder for the elder to communicate or ask for help. Or they may feel afraid or too ashamed to report abuse.

Physical

- Hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking or burning
- Confining or limiting movement
- Giving medicine incorrectly
- Sexual abuse
- Not providing food, care, and a safe environment



Emotional

- Name calling, ridiculing, blaming, or always criticizing
- Ignoring or refusing to talk to the elder

Financial

- Stealing cash, property or money from the elder's financial accounts
- Using a Power of Attorney improperly
- Changing the elder's will or trust
- Selling property against the elder's wishes
- Not providing agreed services
- Pressuring the elder to make certain financial decisions

Elder victims of physical, emotional or sexual abuse may:

- Seem depressed, frightened, agitated, or confused
- Look malnourished, dehydrated, or unclean
- Live in an unclean environment

~Have unexplained or suspicious injuries

~Seem cut off from contact with others

SIGNS OF ELDER ABUSE MAY INCLUDE:

- Changes in an elder's spending habits
- ATM withdrawals, but the elder is not able to walk or get to an ATM
- Signatures that are not in the elder's writing
- Personal property that goes missing
- The elder has money, but lives in poor conditions



You may see these signs in an elder who is *not* being abused. But for the safety of the elder, report it



Ongoing Safety

- Stay Connected—Ask people you know and trust to visit or contact you. It will be harder for someone to abuse you if others are around often.
- Safety Checks- Ask someone you trust to check on you regularly to make sure you are safe. You can ask a relative, social worker, health care worker, advocate, or someone from your church or temple.
- Keep your communication tools handy— phones, computer, hearing aids, etc.)

Education

- Learn about physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and resources in your community. You can get information from your local community center, senior center, or our office.
- Learn how to protect your money and assets.
- Talk to your lawyer about ways to protect your assets.
- Go to a class or free clinic that shows you how to protect your assets.
- Don't let just one person have access to your assets. Having two or more people, such as a service provider and a friend or relative, means each will know what the other does.

Report Abuse

If you think an elder has been abused, report it right away! When abuse *is* reported, the authorities can protect the elder and bring the abuser to justice. When abuse is *not reported*, it continues.

How to Report Elder Abuse?

- Anyone can report abuse, even if you are not a relative or connected to the elder
- If the victim is in a nursing or residential care home, call Kern County Long-Term Care Ombudsman 661-323-7884 or local Law Enforcement
- If the victim does not live in a facility, contact Kern County Aging & Adult Protective Services – 661-868-1000



Programs That Help Elder Victims

Kern County District Attorney

Victim Services Unit
1415 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, California 93301
(661) 868-2400



Senior Legal Hotline Legal Services of Northern California

515-12th Street
Sacramento, California 95814
1 (800) 222-1753
<https://lsnc.net/slh>

Kern County Aging and Adult Services

5357 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, California 93309
(661) 868-1000
www.co.kern.ca.us.aas/

National Elder Care

Elder care locator
1 (800) 677-1116
<http://www.eldercare.gov/>

Kern County Long Term-Care Ombudsman Program

615 California Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93304
661-323-7884
www.kernlongtermcare.com



National Center on Elder Abuse

1 (855) 500-3537
<https://ncea.acl.gov/>

Bureau of Medi-Cal, Fraud and Elder Abuse

Attorney General's Office
California Department of Justice
Attn: Public Inquiry Unit
P.O Box 944255
Sacramento, California 94244-2550
1 (800) 952-5225 Toll Free
<https://oag.ca.gov/bmfea>

If an elder is in danger *right now*....

CALL 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY

