**Mandated Reporters Policy**

**WHO: Report Abuse**

Any person can report abuse-even if you are not a mandatory reporter.

Mandatory Reporters are professionals identified by lay law if they have reason to believe that the abuse, abandonment, neglect, or financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult has occurred.

Mandatory reporters are:

* Employees of the Department of Social and health services (DSHS)
* Law enforcement
* Social workers
* Professional school personnel
* Contracted individual providers caring for a DSHS client
* Employees of a social service, welfare, mental health, home care, Hospice, home health, although daycare, and adult day health agency
* Owners and employees of nursing homes, boarding homes, or adult family homes
* Health care providers subject to title 18 RCW (such as nurses and doctors)
* Christian Science practitioner.

**When: Stay alert to the different types of abuse**

The word abuse covers many ways someone may harm a vulnerable adult.

**Physical abuse is intentionally bodily injury**. Some examples include slapping, pinching, choking, kicking, shoving, or inappropriately using drugs or physical restraints.

**Signs of physical abuse** bruises, black eyes, welts, lacerations, rope marks, broken bones, open wounds, cuts, punctures, untreated injuries in various stages of healing, broken eyeglasses/frames, any physical signs of being punished or restrained, laboratory findings of either an overdose or underdose medication.

*Individuals report being hit, slapped, kicked, or mistreated, vulnerable adults sudden change in behavior the caregiver’s refusal to allow visitors to see a vulnerable adult alone.*

**Sexual abuse is nonconsensual sexual contact any unwanted sexual contact.**

**Signs of sexual abuse** unwanted touching, rape, sodomy, coerced nudity, sexually explicit for photographing, bruises around the breast or genital

area, unexplainedvenereal disease or genital infections, unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding, torn stained or bloody underclothing.

*Individuals report of being sexually assaulted or raped.*

**Mental mistreatment or emotional abuse is deliberately causing mental or emotional pain**.

**Signs of mental mistreatment or emotional abuse** include intimidation, corrosion, ridiculing, harassment, treating an adult like a child, isolating an adult from family, friends, or regular activity, use of silence to control behavior, and yelling or swearing which result in mental distress. Being emotionally upset or agitated, being extremely withdrawn and noncommunicative or non

responsive, unusual behavior usually attributed to dementia (e.g. sucking, biting, rocking)

**Exploitation occurs when a vulnerable adult or his/her resources or income are illegally or improperly used for another person's profit or gain**. Examples include illegally withdrawing money out of another person's account, forging checks, or stealing things out of the vulnerable adult's house.

**Signs of exploitation** sudden changes in bank account or banking practice, including an unexplained withdrawal or large sums of money, adding additional names on bank signature cards, unauthorized withdrawals of funding using an ATM card, abrupt changes in a will or other financial documents, unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions, bills unpaid despite the money being available to pay them, forging a signature or financial transaction or for the titles of possessions, sudden appearance and previously uninvolved relatives claiming rights to a vulnerable adults possessions, unexplained sudden transfer of assets to a family member or someone outside of the family, providing services that are not necessary,

*Individual individuals report to exploitation.*

**Neglect occurs when a person either through his or her action or inaction deprives a vulnerable adult of a care necessary to maintain the vulnerable adults physical or mental health**. Examples include not providing basic items such as food, water, clothing, a safe place to live, medicine or health care.

**Signs of neglect** dehydration, malnutrition, untreated bed sores, poor personal hygiene, unattended or untreated health problems, hazardous or unsafe living conditions (e.g. improper wiring, no heat, running water, unsanitary and unclean living conditions (e.g dirt, fleas, lights on person, soiled bedding, fecal urine smell, inadequate clothing).

*Individual’s report of being mistreated*.

**Signs of self-neglect** dehydration, malnutrition, untreated or improperly attended medical conditions, poor personal hygiene, hazardous or unsafe living conditions, unsanitary or unclean living quarters (e.g. animal insect infestation no functioning toilet, fecal or urine smell). Inappropriate or inadequate clothing, lack of necessary medical aids, grossly inadequate housing or homelessness, inadequate medical care, not taking prescribed medication properly.

**Abandonment occurs when a vulnerable adult is left without the ability to obtain necessary food, clothing, shelter, or health care.** Examples include deserting a vulnerable adult in a public place or leaving a vulnerable adult at a home without the means of getting basic life necessities.

Signs of abandonment deserting a vulnerable adult in a public place, deserting vulnerable adult in his/her own home or living space.

*Individuals report of being abandoned.*

**WHERE AND TO WHO WE REPORT TO:**

**To report abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult in Washington State call the:**

**Complaints Resolution Unit toll-free hotline at 1-800-562-6078 if the person that you suspect is being abused or neglected** is living in a nursing home, boarding home or Adult Family Home.

***When you call***

**You will be asked to give the person’s name, address, contact information and details about why you are concerned. You will also be asked for your name and number or some way of contacting you if the investigator has follow-up questions. Unless there is a court actions, law enforcement has been called in, or you agree, your identity is confidential.**

**Local Adult Protective Services (APS) office if the person you suspect is being abused is living in their own home or somewhere other than a residential care facility.**

**Adult Protective Services**

**Investigates allegations of abuse of a person who lives in their own home.**

**1-877-734-6277**

**TTY # 1-800-681-7091**

**(fax) 1-360-664-9103**

**People who are not mandatory reporters are also strongly encouraged to report abuse.**

When you MUST also call

**Law Enforcement**

Mandatory Reporters must also make a report to law enforcement if they suspect a vulnerable adult has been sexually or physically assaulted, or if they have reasonable cause to believe that an act has caused fear of imminent harm.

Mandatory Reporters may not have to make a report to law enforcement for some types of physical assault between two vulnerable adults.

For these types of physical assault, see **RCW 74.34.035(4)**

**Medical Examiner or Coroner**

Mandatory reporters are also required by law to report a death to the local Medical Examiner or Coroner if there is reason to suspect that the death of a vulnerable adult was caused by abuse.

I\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have read and understood the policy and procedure pertaining to my responsibilities as a mandated reporter of the state of Washington and employee of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

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Employee Name (Print) Employee Signature Date