

# A Safer Maryland for Vulnerable Adults: Recognizing and Preventing Abuse and Neglect

## What We Do

The Medicaid Fraud & Vulnerable Victims Unit (MFVUU) investigates and prosecutes abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults, including older adults and those with disabilities. Our team works to hold offenders accountable and protect vulnerable adults from harm. Established in 1979, the MFVUU is part of Maryland's Office of the Attorney General and is funded by both the federal and state governments.

## What Are Abuse and Neglect?

- **Abuse:** Intentional acts of cruelty or harm to a vulnerable adult, such as slapping, kicking, burning, choking, shoving or bullying.
- **Neglect:** Intentional failure to provide basic needs like food, shelter or medical care to a vulnerable adult. Examples include leaving someone without necessary assistance for extended periods or not giving required medications.

## Who Is a Vulnerable Adult?

A vulnerable adult is anyone over the age of 18 who lacks the physical or mental capacity to meet their daily needs. Vulnerable adults may live in their own homes, in community-based settings or in long-term care facilities. Not all vulnerable adults are senior citizens.

## Who May Be at Risk?

Adults who depend on others for their care may be vulnerable to abuse or neglect. Abuse can happen at home, in nursing homes, adult day care programs, hospitals or group homes. It may be committed by relatives, caregivers or even strangers.



### Signs of Abuse and Neglect

#### Physical signs:

- Unexplained bruises, cuts, burns or fractures
- History of frequent or unexplained injuries

#### Behavioral signs:

- Fear, anxiety or anger
- Withdrawal, depression or sudden changes in mood

#### Signs of Neglect:

- Dehydration, malnutrition or untreated bedsores
- Dirty or unkempt appearance



Access our online reporting form by scanning the QR code below.

Report Abuse  
or Neglect:



## What Stops People From Reporting?

Some people hesitate to report abuse or neglect because they:

- **Are unsure** of what they've seen.
- **Are afraid** of getting involved.
- **Hope it's an isolated incident** that will stop on its own.

**Remember:** You don't need proof—just a reasonable concern. Reporting allows trained professionals investigate and protect vulnerable adults. Many cases go undetected, so your report may be crucial.

## What You Can Do

**Everyone** has a role in protecting vulnerable adults. If you see something disturbing, please don't ignore it.

- **For emergencies:** Contact local law enforcement.
- **To report abuse or neglect:** Contact the MFVVU to report what you know. Use the [online reporting form](#) or contact us via the methods below to give details.
- **For additional resources:** Contact your local [State's Attorney's Office](#).
- **For concerns about care in a nursing home or assisted living facility:** Contact the Maryland Department of Health's [Office of Health Care Quality](#) at 410-402-8100.

## Contact Us

Maryland Office of the Attorney General  
Medicaid Fraud & Vulnerable Victims Unit

- Address: 200 St. Paul Place, 18th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202
- Phone: 410-576-6521 or toll-free at 1-888-743-0023
- Email: [medicaidfraud@oag.maryland.gov](mailto:medicaidfraud@oag.maryland.gov)
- Online: [oag.maryland.gov/i-need-to/Pages/medicaid-fraud-vulnerable-victims.aspx](https://oag.maryland.gov/i-need-to/Pages/medicaid-fraud-vulnerable-victims.aspx)