Elder Justice
A Resource Guide for Action

This Resource Guide was created by WISE & Healthy Aging, and funded in part by the City and County of Los Angeles Area Agencies on Aging.
Recognizing the Signs...

**Physical Abuse**
- Signs of being restrained, such as rope marks on wrists
- Unexplained signs of injury such as bruises, welts, scars, broken bones or sprains
- Over or under medication
- Broken eyeglasses or frame
- Caregiver’s refusal to allow you to see the person alone
- Report of drug overdose or apparent failure to take medication regularly
- Physical or chemical restraints for caregiver’s convenience

**Emotional Abuse**
- Threatening, belittling, or controlling caregiver behavior that you witness
- Caregiver isolates elder; refusing to allow access to visitors, mail, phone, etc.
- Uncharacteristic behavior such as withdrawal or changes in alertness

**Sexual Abuse**
- Bruises around breasts or genitals
- Unexplained sexually transmitted diseases or unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing

**Neglect by Caregivers or Self-Neglect**
- Unusual weight loss, malnutrition, dehydration
- Untreated physical problems, such as bed sores
- Unsanitary living conditions: dirt, bugs, soiled bedding and clothes
- Poor hygiene, lack of clean or appropriate clothing
- Unsafe living conditions (no heat or running water; faulty electrical wiring, fire hazards)
- Desertion of the elder at a public place

**Financial Exploitation**
- Significant or unauthorized withdrawals from the elder’s accounts
- Sudden changes in the elder’s financial condition
- Items or cash missing from the household
- Suspicious changes in wills, power of attorney, titles, and policies
- Addition of names to the elder’s signature card
- Unpaid bills or lack of medical care, although the elder has enough money to pay for them
- Financial activity the elder couldn’t have done, such as ATM withdrawals by a bedridden account holder
- Unnecessary services, goods, or subscriptions
- Unusual change in spending habits

**Scams**
- Constant phone calls from various phone numbers
- Elder/adult suddenly wiring money
- Large accumulation of lottery mail
- Elder/adult secretive about a relationship with someone they have not met in person
Protecting Yourself...

Do:
• Stay active with your local senior center. It can be a valuable source of information.
• Plan for your care as you age. Identify reliable people who can provide assistance if needed.
• Review your finances regularly. Be extremely cautious when selecting "trustworthy" individuals to help manage your affairs when needed.
• Participate in community activities. Volunteering is a great way to have contact with others and make friends. Call WISE & Healthy Aging at 310-394-9871 for volunteer opportunities.

Don’t:
• Don’t put off preparing your future physical and financial needs.
• Don’t accept personal care from anyone in exchange for property or assets without a lawyer or other trusted advocate to witness the transaction.
• Don’t allow others to keep details of your finances from you.
• Don’t give out personal or financial information to people you don’t know, especially over the phone.
• Don’t sign legal documents that you do not understand.

WISE & Healthy Aging is a non-profit, social services organization recognized for its wide range of innovative support services designed to meet the needs of a diverse clientele within the greater Los Angeles area.

Our mission is to advance the dignity and quality of life of older adults through leadership, advocacy and high-quality, innovative services.
Financial Fraud and Exploitation

Credit Card Fraud
If you are a victim of identity theft, or you want to avoid becoming a victim of identity theft, call these agencies to freeze new accounts being opened in your name. Also for disputes regarding your credit record.
Experian: www.experian.com 888-397-3742
Equifax: www.equifax.com 800-525-6285
TransUnion: www.transunion.com
800-680-7289
Free Annual Credit Report Request a free credit report: www.annualcreditreport.com
877-322-8228

Mail Fraud
877-876-2455
Opt-out from unsolicited mail, pre-approved credit card and insurance offers:
888-567-8688
Direct Marketing Association Inc. Remove name from mailing & emailing list:
www.dmachoice.org

Telephone Fraud
Federal Trade Commission (FTC)
Telemarketing fraud/identity theft:
877-382-4357
Do Not Call Registry Stop telemarketers from calling you: www.donotcall.gov
888-382-1222

Internet Crime/Spam
Internet Crime Complaint Center
www.ic3.gov

Broker/Investment Fraud
California Department of Business Oversight
Seniors Against Investment Fraud (SAIF)
866-275-2677
Concerns about brokers, investment advisers, financial planners, mortgage lenders and bill payers: www.corp.ca.gov
Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) BrokerCheck Check the background of a broker or brokerage: 800-289-9999

Consumer Issues
California Department of Consumer Affairs
Check licenses for doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals: www.dca.ca.gov
800-952-5210
California Department of Insurance
Insurance concerns: www.insurance.ca.gov
800-927-4357
California Department of Real Estate
Real estate concerns: www.dre.ca.gov
213-620-2072
California Public Utilities Commission
Utility complaints: www.cpuc.ca.gov/puc
800-649-7570
Contractors State License Board
Concerns regarding licensed and unlicensed contractors: www.cslb.ca.gov
800-321-2752
Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs
Landlord/tenant issues, housing discrimination, homebuyer issues, consumer complaints: www.dca.lacounty.gov
800-593-8222
General Information

- City of Los Angeles Department of Aging and Information and Assistance: 213-482-7252
- County of Los Angeles Area Agency on Aging: 800-510-2020
- Department of Community and Senior Services: www.css.lacounty.gov  213-738-4004
- Los Angeles County Information and Referral, dial: 211  www.infoline-la.org
- City of Los Angeles Information and Referral, dial: 311 or visit www.lacity.org/311-services
- WISE & Healthy Aging Information & Referral for senior services: 310-394-9871

Legal Assistance

- Bet Tzedek Legal Services: www.bettzedek.org  323-939-0506
- California State Attorney General: www.ag.ca.gov  800-952-5225
- Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles: www.lafla.org  800-399-4529
- Los Angeles City Attorney’s Office Elder Abuse Hotline: 877-477-3646
- Los Angeles County Bar Association Lawyer Referral & Information Smart Law  www.smartlaw.org  213-243-1525
- Los Angeles County District Attorney Elder Abuse Section: 213-257-2290
- Los Angeles County Public Administrator - Public Guardian: 213-974-0515
- CANHR State Bar Certified Lawyer Referral Service: 800-474-1116

Domestic Violence

- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233
- Domestic Violence Hotline Southern California: 800-978-3600  
  (Callers may receive help in 13 languages)
- Jewish Family Service Family Violence Project: 818-505-0900 (crisis line)
- VINE - Victim Information and Notification Everyday 
  (A service by the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department to notify you when the status of an inmate changes) 877-846-3452

Mental Wellness

- County of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health,  
  Older Adult Services ACCESS Center  
  (Help regarding hoarding and other mental health issues): 800-854-7771
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255
- Los Angeles Warmline (phone support): 855-952-9276
Resources...

Social Security Administration
- www.socialsecurity.gov Fraud Hotline: 800-269-0271

Medicare or Medi-Cal Fraud
- California Attorney General Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud & Elder Abuse: 800-722-0432
  On-line complaint form: www.ag.ca.gov/bmfea
- Center for Health Care Rights/California Health Advocates: www.cahealthadvocates.org
  Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)
  Medicare and healthcare counseling: 800-434-0222
- Department of Health Services for Medi-Cal fraud: 800-822-6222
- U.S. Health & Human Services TIPS Hotline to report Medicare fraud: 800-447-8477
- Los Angeles County District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance
  http://da.co.la.ca.us: 800-380-3811 or 626-927-2500
- Ageless Alliance http://agelessalliance.org
  (Uniting against elder abuse through awareness, support and community engagement)

Reporting...

Dial 911 to report elder abuse or neglect to the Police NOW if the abuse is immediate and life-threatening.

Elder Abuse Hotline at 877-477-3646 or 800-992-1660 to report allegations of abuse when you are unsure on where to call.

Adult Protective Services, County of Los Angeles, 888-202-4248 if you suspect elder abuse in the community. Call 213-351-5401 if you are outside of Los Angeles County.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman, at WISE & Healthy Aging 800-334-9473 and report suspected abuse occurring at board and care homes, nursing homes and assisted living facilities in LA County. Statewide Ombudsman after hours crisis line: 800-231-4024.