

# Help stop Elder Abuse

## Call the WA Elder Abuse Helpline and Information Service

If you or someone you know is experiencing elder abuse, or has a question about elder abuse, please call the WA Elder Abuse Helpline on **1300 724 679** for a confidential discussion.

The helpline is funded by the Department of Communities and operated by Advocare, a not-for-profit organisation that supports and protects the rights of older people in Western Australia through advocacy, information and education.

WA Elder Abuse Helpline and Information Service

**1300 724 679**

8:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday

## Which support services can you turn to?

If you feel that your rights are being exploited or abused, you can take action through these support services.

### Council on the Ageing WA (COTA WA)

is the Vulnerable Seniors Peak Body in Western Australia. Go to [www.cotawa.org.au](http://www.cotawa.org.au) or call COTA WA on **(08) 9472 0104**.

**Advocare** assists older people to understand their rights and provides free confidential information and support to older people who are at risk of or experiencing elder abuse. Call the **WA Elder Abuse Helpline and Information Service** on **1300 724 679**.

**Elder Rights WA (ERWA)** provides legal advice, assistance and representation to vulnerable seniors for certain types of legal matters. Social Workers are also available to support in dealing with social, physical and mental challenges which may impact their legal concerns. This service is provided by Legal Aid WA. Email [ElderRightsWA@legalaid.wa.gov.au](mailto:ElderRightsWA@legalaid.wa.gov.au) or call the Infoline on **1300 650 579**.

**Older People's Rights Service** offers legal advice, advocacy, peer education sessions and social support to those at risk of or experiencing elder abuse, with a focus on positive ageing. Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre provides this service. Email [oprs@nsclegal.org.au](mailto:oprs@nsclegal.org.au) or call **08 9440 1663**.

**Office of the Public Advocate** works to promote and protect the human rights of Western Australian adults with decision-making disabilities. The Office can provide information about Enduring Power of Attorney and Enduring Power of Guardianship. Go to [www.publicadvocate.wa.gov.au](http://www.publicadvocate.wa.gov.au) or call the **Telephone Advisory Service** on **1300 858 455**.

**The Public Trustee** offers independent trustee and asset management services. These include Will and Enduring Power of Attorney drafting, deceased estate administration, executor support, financial administration and trust management services. Go to [www.publictrustee.wa.gov.au](http://www.publictrustee.wa.gov.au) or call **1300 746 212**.



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Communities**



Everything you've ever wondered (and more) about

# Elder Abuse





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You have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. You have the right to live free of abuse.

## What is elder abuse?

Elder abuse is an act, or lack of action, that causes harm or distress to an older person. It is often carried out by someone the older person trusts, including a family member or friend.

The most common types of elder abuse are:

- **financial** abuse, such as using your money or property without your permission.
- **psychological** and **emotional** abuse, such as threats.
- **neglect**, such as not providing food, shelter or care.
- **physical** and **sexual** abuse.
- **social** abuse, such as forced isolation from family or friends.

## How can you protect yourself?

### Reduce the risks by:

- Staying socially connected: join a club or group and stay in touch with friends.
- Maintaining independence: take up new activities and meet new people.
- Staying physically and mentally healthy: exercise daily, eat a balanced diet, visit your GP regularly, join a book club or take up a short course.
- Staying emotionally healthy: ask for help if you are feeling down or anxious or talk to your GP.

### Plan for your future security by:

- Deciding what you want for your future if your circumstances change and/or your health declines.
- Discussing your wishes with trusted family or friends.
- Getting independent advice before signing legal documents, including your will.
- Staying aware of your financial position: keep your banking details in a secure place.

### Be aware of your rights:

- You have a right to be safe, protected, valued and respected.
- You have a right to make your own decisions, such as where you live and your finances. If you are feeling pressured to make a decision or sign a document, stop and seek independent advice.

## Be informed

Elder abuse is largely hidden and underreported, so it's important that we all get involved and raise awareness of elder abuse to help prevent it from happening.

The national website **Compass** is a good informational starting point for navigating elder abuse. Compass aims to create a national focus on elder abuse by raising awareness of this growing social issue and simplifying the process of connecting people to services and information. Go to **[www.compass.info](http://www.compass.info)**

Elder abuse information and resources are also available on the Department of Communities website. You can read our state's first ever strategy into elder abuse: *The WA Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People (Elder Abuse)*. This 10-year strategy, released in November 2019, is a blueprint for the priorities, actions and outcomes required to effectively prevent and respond to the abuse of older people.

To download the strategy and access other information and resources, go to **[www.communities.wa.gov.au/elderabusehelp](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/elderabusehelp)**

