



MIKE DEWINE

★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov

1-800- 282-05015

Victim signs can include but are not limited to:

GENERAL BEHAVIOR INDICATORS:

- Is afraid to speak in the presence of the suspect or looks to the suspect to answer questions
- Is confined (e.g. tied to furniture or locked in a room)
- Is isolated
- Denies, minimizes, or blames self for what has happened is hesitant to discuss, or gives “coded” disclosures – such as “my son has a temper.”
- Changes in behavior without explanation
- Waits or fails to seek out help or medical treatment, missed appointments, or frequently changes doctors or hospitals
- Visits hospital or physician with vague complaints such as anxiety, headaches, or digestive problems
- Provides implausible or inconsistent explanations about what has occurred
- Appears afraid, embarrassed, ashamed, withdrawn, or depressed
- Reports being abused neglected or exploited
- Suddenly withdraws from routine activities

INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE:

- Bruises, black eyes, welts, lacerations, and rope marks
- Bone fractures, broken bones, and skull fractures
- Open wounds, cuts, punctures, untreated injuries in various stages of healing
- Subjected to punishment, and signs of being restrained
- Sprains, dislocations, and internal injuries/bleeding
- Broken eyeglasses/frames, physical signs of being subjected to punishment, and signs of being restrained
- Laboratory findings of a medication overdose or underutilization of prescribed drugs
- Injuries in various degrees of healing
- Patterned injuries caused by an object
- Injuries NOT in locations normally associated with accidental injuries such as: on the outside of arms, inside of legs, scalp, around throat, face, soles of feet, inside mouth, on or behind the ears, on the trunk, genitalia, and buttocks
- Repeated, unexplained, or untreated injuries

INDICATORS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

- Verbal aggression or threat;
- Social Isolation - No visitors allowed
- Threats of institutionalization
- Abusing a pet to hurt the person
- Humiliating statements



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INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE:

- Unexplained STDs or HIV, vaginal or anal bleeding
- Torn, stained, and/or bloody clothing, including underwear, bedding, or furnishings
- An elder's report of being sexually assaulted or raped
- Infections, pain, or bleeding in genital areas
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Inappropriate (enmeshed) relationship between older adult and suspect
- Bruises to outer arms, chest, mouth, genitals, abdomen, pelvis, or inside thighs, or around the breasts
- Bite marks
- Coded disclosures such as "I might be pregnant"

INDICATORS OF NEGLECT:

- Failure to provide food, clothing, or shelter
- Failure to provide socialization
- Dehydration or malnutrition
- Presence of untreated bedsores (pressure ulcers)
- Under, over, or mis-medicating an older adult
- Leaving an older adult in feces, urine
- Failure to follow recommended turning procedures for older adults who are bedridden
- Poor hygiene
- Failure to take older adult to medical appointments, hospital
- Unexplained changes in older adult's weight or cognition
- Inappropriate clothing for conditions
- Filthy bedding, clothing
- Broken, or absence of, needed medical equipment, aids such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, walkers, wheelchairs

SELF-NEGLECT:

- The behavior of an elderly person that threatens his/her own health or safety. Generally manifests itself in an older person as a refusal or failure to provide himself/herself with adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, medication (when indicated), and safety precautions

INDICATORS OF FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION:

- The older adult is unaware of monthly income and bills, and if they are paid
- Important possessions, documents or credit cards are missing
- The caregiver refuses to spend the older adult's money on the older adult
- The older adult has given many expensive gifts to the caregiver
- Checks are made out to cash or the caregiver asks or coerces an older adult to sign a blank check and then the caregiver misuses the check or steals the money



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Suspect signs can include, but are not limited to:

- Provides inconsistent/conflicting explanations about the older adult's injuries
- Belittles, threatens, or insults the older adult
- Handles the older adult roughly
- Ignores the older adult's need for assistance or is reluctant to help the older adult
- Has a past history of being abusive
- Does not speak to or provide companionship to the older adult and isolates him or her from the outside world, friends or relatives
- Controls and dominates the older adult, is always present when anyone talks with the older adult, speaks for him/her, and is overly protective or defensive
- Portrays self as victim or only caring person in older adult's life
- May be charming/helpful toward professionals and the victim while others are present
- Abuses the older adult's pets
- Controls and dominates the older adult's life/activities
- Justifies and minimizes own actions

POWER OF ATTORNEY (POA):

- An instrument by which one person (the principal) transfers authority to make decisions such as medical care, end of life decisions, or financial management to another (the attorney in fact). The authority must be created while the principal has mental capacity and can be revoked at any time while having capacity. There is no court oversight of POAs.

GUARDIANSHIP/CONSERVATORSHIP:

- A mechanism by which a court grants certain powers to a family member, other individual, governmental agency, or institution to control the affairs of a person (ward) who is incapable of managing for him or herself. Courts generally require medical reports about the mental capacity of the proposed ward before appointing a guardian.

*When evaluating any document, consider:

- What does this document authorize?
- What are the limitations on authority?
- When does it become effective?
- Who has the authority to act?
- Does it authorize gifts or loans to the person with decision making authority?



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PROVIDE AS MUCH OF THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE WHEN MAKING A REFERRAL REGARDING ELDER ABUSE/NEGLECT/EXPLOITATION:

- Name, address and approximate age of the vulnerable adult
- Name and address of the person responsible for the vulnerable adult's care
- Name and address of the alleged perpetrator
- The reason you suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation
- The nature and extent of the suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Evidence of previous abuse
- Any other information that would be helpful to identify the cause of the alleged abuse/neglect/exploitation