How can I help?

Anyone who suspects that an adult age 60 years or older or an adult with a disability age 18-59 is being mistreated by someone or self-neglecting should call:

- The Department on Aging’s 24-Hour Adult Protective Services Hotline: 1-866-800-1409

Reports may also be made directly to the Adult Protective Services Provider Agency where the adult resides. For local information visit: www.illinois.gov/aging/ProtectionAdvocacy/Pages/abuse.aspx

Callers should be prepared to report the client or alleged victim’s name and address, what happened, where and when it happened, information about the suspected abuser(s), circumstances which led to the report, and whether there is any immediate danger.

What happens after a report of abuse?

Under the Illinois Adult Protective Services Act, a provider agency designated to receive reports of alleged or suspected abuse, neglect, financial exploitation or self-neglect will respond to each report.

A trained caseworker will interview the person who has allegedly been abused or is self-neglecting. If appropriate, an investigation will be pursued to assist in accessing resources and services to stop this abuse. The person has a right to accept or decline such assistance. A provider agency will also refer evidence of crimes to law enforcement.

All reports are kept confidential, and anonymous reports are accepted.
What is Adult Abuse?
Adult abuse is a term referring to an act or failure to act by a caregiver or any other individual that causes harm or a serious risk of harm to a vulnerable adult. Illinois law provides the following definitions:

- **Physical abuse** — inflicting physical pain or injury upon an adult.
- **Sexual abuse** — touching, fondling, intercourse, or any other sexual activity with an adult, when the adult is unable to understand, unwilling to consent, threatened or physically forced.
- **Emotional abuse** — verbal assaults, threats of maltreatment, harassment or intimidation.
- **Confinement** — restraining or isolating an adult, other than for medical reasons.
- **Passive neglect** — the caregiver’s failure to provide an adult with life’s necessities, including, but not limited to, food, clothing, shelter or medical care.
- **Willful deprivation** — deliberate denial of an adult’s medication, medical care, shelter, food, a therapeutic device or other physical assistance, which thereby exposes that adult to the risk of physical, mental, or emotional harm – except when the adult has expressed an intent to forego such care.

- **Financial exploitation** — the misuse or withholding of an adult’s resources by another, to the disadvantage of the adult or the profit or advantage of someone else.
- **Self-Neglect** — a condition that is the result of an adult’s inability, due to physical or mental impairments, or both, or a diminished capacity, to perform essential self-care tasks that substantially threaten his or her own health, including: providing essential food, clothing, shelter, and health care, and obtaining goods and services necessary to maintain physical health, mental health, emotional wellbeing, and general safety.

What else do I need to know?
- **Adult abuse does not discriminate.** Adult abuse can affect people of all ethnic backgrounds and levels of social status. An abuse victim may be your neighbor, friend or family member. It is estimated that only one in every 10 cases of adult abuse is reported.
- **We must all do our part to report abuse.** In FY 2018, 17,085 reports of adult abuse were made in Illinois.
- **Your report can make a difference.** Reporting adult abuse or self-neglect gives individuals the opportunity to receive the help they need to stop the abuse or self-neglecting behavior, and can reduce their risk in the future.

What should I do if I suspect abuse of an older adult or an adult with a disability?
**Report.**

- **Voluntary Reporters.** Any person can voluntarily report. By law, anyone making a report in good faith has civil and criminal immunity from liability and professional disciplinary action.
- **Mandated Reporters.** Certain professionals are required by law to report suspected abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of persons age 60 years and over or adults with disabilities age 18-59 who live in the community and because of a disability or other condition or impairment are unable to report for themselves.* Among those required to report suspected abuse are: doctors, nurses, psychologists, dentists, social service workers and law enforcement personnel.

No matter who reports, the identity of the reporter is not disclosed without the written permission of the reporter or by order of a court.