

Executive Office of
Elder Affairs

**ELDER ABUSE
HOTLINE
1-800-922-2275**



**Middlesex Elder and
Disabled Persons
Protection Unit
(781) 897-8420**

**Elder Services of
Merrimack Valley
(800) 892-0890**

**Minuteman
Senior Services
(781) 272-7177**

**Montachusett Home
Care Corporation
(978) 537-7411**

**Mystic Valley
Elder Services
(781) 324-7705**

**Somerville/Cambridge
Elder Services
(617) 628-2601**

**Springwell, Inc.
(617) 926-4100**



Ask for Help

Elder abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual or financial. It can take place at home, in a hospital or at a health care facility. The abuser could be a spouse, family member, friend, caregiver or stranger.

If you are over the age of 60, and are being abused or neglected, talk to someone you trust. Ask a friend, relative, neighbor or health care provider for help.

If you are reluctant to confide in someone you know, contact one of the resources listed in this brochure. If you need immediate help, call 911.

AVOID

- **Lottery and sweepstakes scams** solicited by mail, phone, email or letter.
- **Anyone** wanting to verify your personal information, including your bank account or social security number. Do not give personal information to anyone, whether you know them or not!
- **Unscrupulous contractors** who "stop by", offering a great deal on home repairs. If you need construction on your home, be sure that the contractor is licensed and insured. Check with the Better Business Bureau and don't pay up front!
- **Fraudulent charities.** If you want to contribute to a charity, find out about the organization before making a donation.

***Beware of offers that
seem too good
to be true!***

Protecting Our Elders

**Marian T. Ryan
District Attorney
Middlesex County**



**Elder and Disabled Persons
Protection Unit
15 Commonwealth Avenue
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 897-8420; (781) 897-8403 fax
www.middlesexda.com**





Dear Friend,

As your District Attorney, I am committed to protecting elders from physical, emotional and financial abuse. My office has a team of talented and compassionate prosecutors and victim witness advocates who are trained to investigate and prosecute any form of elder abuse.

We understand that many elders fall prey to abusers and opportunists and we recognize that speaking up can be difficult, or even shameful. If you are a victim, I urge you to talk to someone – a friend, relative, physician or police officer.

Some people are unable to speak for themselves. If you notice signs of elder abuse or neglect in a relative, friend, neighbor, or client, please report it to someone listed in this brochure.

We are here to help.

Marian T. Ryan

Frequently Asked Questions

I am being abused and I am afraid. What should I do?

Call your local police department. All departments have police officers who are trained to assist and protect elders.

If I call the police, will my abuser be arrested?

Maybe. If the police arrive and find evidence of abuse, they may arrest the abuser. In non-urgent situations, the police may notify the offender that he must appear in court at a later date. Your safety and any risk of flight by the offender are important considerations in making this decision.

What if I don't want to call the police, but just want the abuse to stop?

If the abuse was caused by a spouse, a former spouse, or a family member, a judge can issue an Abuse Prevention Order. This document orders the offender to restrain from further physical abuse or threats.

Is there anyone I can call besides the police?

Help is also available from your local Elder Services Agency and resources listed in this brochure.

Money Matters

Protect your private financial information. Don't give anyone your ATM card, PIN number, passwords, or blank, signed checks, no matter how well you may think you know that person.

If I report abuse and my at-home caretaker is arrested, will I end up in a nursing home?

In Massachusetts, the law (M.G.L. c. 19A, §18) requires the Department of Elder Services to provide services to elders using the "least restrictive alternatives." These services include, nursing care, homemaker services, meals on wheels and bill-paying assistance. Moving to a nursing home is to be considered only as a last resort.

All of my money is in a joint bank account that I share with a relative. Can the money only be used for my benefit?

No. When there is a joint bank account, the money legally belongs to both

persons named on the account. It doesn't matter if you earned the money or you both agreed that the money is yours. Anyone named on the account can remove all of the money without facing criminal charges.

Should I give family members my Power of Attorney?

Power of Attorney authorizes someone to make important decisions on your behalf. Before assigning this power, consult with a professional so the power spells out the terms, conditions and limitations of the authority.

I plan to have surgery. Should I give someone Power of Attorney to make medical decisions?

No. Most hospitals have Health Care Proxy forms, allowing you to give someone the power to make medical decisions on your behalf. This authority does not have to include the power to make other types of decisions, such as financial decisions.

More Questions?

**Call the DA's Elder and Disabled Persons Protection Unit
(781) 897-8420**