**Stop Abuse, Neglect and Poor Quality Services:**

**At Home and In the Community**

People with disabilities have the right to be free from abuse and neglect and to get quality services from their providers.

If you live in your own home or with your family or friends, there are different ways to get help if you are being abused, neglected, or not getting the services you need. \*\*If you get services from a community provider that works with people with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness, read our fact sheet for Community Agencies & Facilities Including CILAs.

This fact sheet answers the following questions:

1. What is abuse?
2. What is neglect?
3. What are examples of poor quality services?
4. How do you report problems?
5. How to protect yourself or others from more harm?

What is abuse?

There are a lot of different kinds of abuse, including:

Physical abuse, like hitting, pushing or kicking someone.

Emotional abuse, like threatening, yelling at or being mean to someone.

Sexual abuse, like forcing or tricking someone to do something sexual.

Financial abuse, like taking someone’s money or things.

Isolation, like stopping someone from talking to other people or getting help.

What is neglect?

Neglect is not giving someone the care they need to be healthy or safe, including:

Not taking someone to see a doctor if they are sick.

Not giving someone enough food or not noticing if they lose a lot of weight.

Not following plans to help keep someone safe.

Leaving someone alone when someone should be with them.

Not protecting someone when another person is abusing them.

What are examples of poor services?

When someone gets services from a home help provider, they have a right to help plan what their services will be. They also have a right to get the services that are in their plan. They have a right to have their basic rights and needs met. Some examples of poor quality services are:

* Not giving someone privacy.
* Not helping someone work on their goals.
* Not helping people buy the things they need.

How do you report abuse or neglect?

When someone is abusive or neglects someone with a disability, it is important to report it as soon as possible.

The Illinois Department on Aging’s Adult Protective Services unit looks into complaints of abuse and neglect against people with disabilities and older adults who live in an unlicensed facility, alone at home, with family, with a support worker or caregiver, or with others.

To report someone, call the Adult Protective Services (APS) Hotline at **1-866-800-1409**. APS will visit the victim and may talk to other people and agencies. If APS decides that abuse or neglect may have occurred, it will work with the victim and others to help create a plan that can include services to help stop the problem.

APS’ hotline is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The person taking your call will ask you questions that can include:

* The victim’s name, address, telephone number, age, and condition
* The name of the person who did the abuse or neglect
* Details about what happened
* If the victim is in danger
* Names and contact information

How do you report poor quality services?

If the person receives home services through the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) there are a few places to call for help with poor quality services.

* **First**, you can call your case worker, called a “counselor,” at DRS for help.
* **Second**, you can ask the Home Care Ombudsman for help by calling **1-800-252-8966**, press 4 for "other services," and ask for a Home Care Ombudsman. You can also email them at Aging.HCOProgram@illinois.gov.
* Third, you can call your local Center for Independent Living (CIL) for help. To find your local CIL go to <https://incil.org/locate/>.
* If you still have problems after calling the above places, call Equip for Equality at **1-800-537-2632**.

If the person receives poor quality services from providers that are not through DRS, call the business about the problem. If that doesn’t fix the problem, call your local CIL (find here: <https://incil.org/locate/>) or call Equip for Equality at **1-800-537-2632**.

How do I protect myself or others from more harm?

There are many things you can do for yourself or others for protection from harm.

The following are some of the things that you can do:

**Call the police:** If someone is in danger, call 911.

**Order of Protection:** You can ask for an Order of Protection in court to protect yourself or others from abuse or neglect. Do this if a disability makes it hard to stop the problem and if a family or household member is the person doing the abuse or neglect.

“Family or household members” are people related to the victim, people related to the victim’s spouse or former spouse, or someone the victim is or was dating. They are also people who live with or used to live with the victim. Personal assistants and caregivers of the victim are also “family or household members.”. See Equip for Equality’s “**Orders of Protection for Persons with Disabilities**” fact sheet for more information.

**Informal advocacy:** People who abuse or neglect may be less likely to do that if someone else is around. Just having someone else help and make themselves known can help. Also, just knowing that someone is involved and giving help may result in more action being taken for the victim after a report has been made. If the person doing the harmful things is an employee where the victim lives, think about asking for that employee to be removed or replaced.

Have More Questions?

Call Equip for Equality.

1-800-537-2632

contactus@equipforequality.org

<http://www.equipforequality.org/stop_abuse>

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