

**POSSIBLE PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS
OF ADULT ABUSE, EMOTIONAL ABUSE,
NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION**

Adult in Need of Protective Services

A person 18 years of age or older whose behavior indicates that he is mentally incapable of adequately caring for himself and his interests without serious consequences to himself or others, or who, because of physical or mental impairment, is unable to protect himself from abuse, neglect or exploitation by others, and who has no guardian or relative or other appropriate person able, willing and available to assume the kind and degree of protection and supervision required under the circumstances.

Section 38-9-2 Code of Alabama

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the infliction of physical pain, injury, or the willful deprivation by a caretaker or other person of services necessary to maintain mental and physical health.

Section 38-9-2 Code of Alabama

Possible Indicators of Physical Abuse

Abrasions, e.g., mark from rope or other restraint, especially on arms, legs, torso
Burns, especially unusual location, pattern, shape, or size/cigarette burns, especially on soles of feet, palms, back, or buttocks

Bruises and hematomas

Bilateral bruising, e.g. on both upper arms, top of both shoulders, both sides of face, etc. (can indicate shaking)

Bilateral bruising on soft parts of body, not over body prominence (knees and elbows)

Inner arm/thigh bruises or bruises on top of the head

Clustered bruises from repeated striking

Bruising at several different places on the body

Presence of old and new bruises at the same time (as from repeated injuries at different stages of resolution)

Dating of Bruises:

0 – 2 days swollen , tender

2 – 5 days red-blue

5 – 7 days green

7 – 10 days yellow

10 –14 days brown

2 – 4 weeks clear

Bruises resembling an object or human hand

Bruises that do not resemble the explanation given for the cause

Bruises that regularly appear, e.g. after stress on family, visits by others on weekends, etc.

Possible Indicators of Emotional Abuse

Ambivalence toward caregivers or family member
Dilated pupils/slurred speech
Emotional numbness
Excessive dependency
Fearfulness of caregivers or others
Isolation from others
Rapid decline of physical condition
Signs of infantile behavior
Sudden weight loss/gain
Withdrawal/depression/agitation

Neglect

Neglect is the failure of a caregiver to provide food, shelter, clothing, medical services, and health care for the person unable to care for himself; or the failure of the person to provide these basic needs for himself when the failure is the result of the person's mental or physical inability.

Section 38-9-2 Code of Alabama

Possible Indicators of Neglect

Condition of Living Environment

Crowded living space, e.g., adult sleeping on a sofa in living room
Disconnected utilities
Empty bottles of liquor /illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia
Housing that does not protect person from weather conditions, i.e. extreme heat or cold, rain, snow, etc.
Human and animal waste on floors and /or furniture
Inadequate heating or heating that is dangerous
Inadequate ventilation/cooling
Lack of clothing or necessary medications
Lack of food or inedible food/inadequate food storage or food preparation equipment
Lack of potable water, unavailable
Lack of toileting facilities
Multiple unused prescription medications
Unsafe living conditions, e.g. rotting floors, fallen ceiling, holes in walls, faulty wiring, clutter; etc.
Unsanitary conditions, including infestations of rats, roaches, fleas, etc.

Condition of Victim of Neglect by Caregiver

Clothing inappropriate for weather; filthy/torn /too big or too small
Dehydration indicated by low or non-existent intake of fluids/low urinary output/dry, fragile skin/dry, sore mouth /constipation/apathy or lack of energy and mental confusion.
Evidence of poor personal hygiene, e.g. body odor, odor of urine or feces, overgrown or unclean nails, unwashed, matted or lice-infested hair, unclean skin, unshaven, poor mouth care/decayed teeth
Extreme dirtiness of bedding or of dishes and cooking utensils
Inability to perform the activities of daily living and absence of assistance or supervision
Improper restraint to bed or chair/contractures
Lack of clothing
Lack of needed dentures/eyeglasses/hearing aids/prosthetic devices
Lack of supervision/being left alone for long periods
Lying in feces, urine, old food
Malnourishment indicated by low, sporadic or non-existent intake of food/weight loss/confusion/edema
Medication mismanagement, e.g., over medication or medication not given correctly or not given at all
Numerous insect bites
Prolonged interval between illness and presentation for medical care
Shoes on the wrong feet or ill fitting
Therapeutic diet not followed
Untreated decubiti (bed sores)/skin rashes related to unchanged bedding/urine-soaked linens
Untreated medical conditions, unhealed sores, untreated injuries
Untreated mental conditions
Wearing same clothing all the time

Condition of Victim of Self-Neglect

Denial of need for life sustaining medical care
Excessive need to maintain control over one's life and decisions
Inability to adequately perform self care tasks combined with lack of recognition of or admission to these limitations
Lack of motivation for self care
Poor grooming that leads to isolation, disease or disintegration of the body
Refusal to accept necessary services and assistance
Refusal to use finances to meet basic needs
Wandering, hallucinations, delusions, confusion

Financial Exploitation

Exploitation is the expenditure, diminution or use of the property, assets or resources of a protected person without the express voluntary consent of that person or his legally authorized representative.

Section 38-9-2 Code of Alabama

Possible Indicators of Financial Exploitation

- Adult gives large amounts of money or extravagant gifts, (e.g., cars, etc.) to family or others
- Unusual activity in bank accounts, i.e., drastic changes in types, frequency, or amount of withdrawals, withdrawals from automated banking machines when the person cannot walk or get to the bank
- Power of attorney given or will drawn up when the adult is unable to comprehend his/her financial situation and lacks the capacity to give a valid power of attorney
- Presence of unrelated/related people in adult's home who do not have incomes/have addictions
- Unusual interest by caregiver in the amount of money being expended for the care of the adult; concern that too much is being spent
- Caregiver refuses to spend money on the care of the elder.
- Caregiver well dressed while adult is poorly dressed
- Numerous unpaid bills such as overdue rent, utilities, taxes, when someone is supposed to be paying the bills; utilities cut off
- Recent acquaintances expressing gushy, undying affection for a wealthy-adult
- Recent change of title of house in favor of a friend or relative when the adult is incapable of understanding the nature of the transaction
- Caregiver who only asks financial questions of the worker; does not ask questions about the care of the adult
- Lack of amenities, i.e., TV, personal grooming supplies, appropriate clothing, etc., when the adult can well afford these items
- Missing personal belongings such as art, silverware, jewelry, etc.
- Caregiver tries to isolate adult from old friends and family; tells adult no one wants to see them; gradually gains total control; ask adult "What would you do without me?" and then says they will stay only if the will is changed in favor of the caregiver
- Promises of life-long care in exchange for willing or deeding of all property/bank accounts to caregiver
- Signature of checks, etc., does not resemble adult's signature

Possible Behavioral Indicators of the Adult Victim

- Adult complains that he/she used to have money and doesn't now; depleted bank accounts
- Adult no longer sees government checks or other pension /benefit checks
- Adult says he/she has been signing papers and doesn't know what they are
- Adult seems unaware or confused about financial situation
- Alcohol dependency/functioning is impaired due to alcohol abuse
- Asks to be separated from the caregiver (abuser)
- Averts gaze or turns away from suspected abusers or others
- Caregiver grossly over charges adult for rent or services
- Caregiver is evasive about financial arrangements
- Checks and other documents signed with adult's name when the adult cannot write
- Cries easily/frequently