



Reporting Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Disabilities Who Live in a Facility

People with disabilities who cannot live in their own homes may live in facilities, including:

- Nursing homes,
- Residential facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities including Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF/ID) and Community Training Homes II (CTH II),
- Assisted living facilities or community residential care facilities (CRCF),
- State mental health or state substance abuse treatment hospitals, or
- Residential treatment facilities for children and adolescents (RTF).

Abuse, neglect, or exploitation of someone who lives in a facility is wrong and should be reported. Abuse is inappropriate treatment of an individual. It includes physical, psychological, emotional, and sexual abuse. Neglect is the refusal or failure of a caregiver to provide for the needs of a child or vulnerable adult. Neglect includes not providing adequate food, housing, or medical care. Exploitation is taking improper advantage of an individual. It can involve finances, material, labor, or activity. Please see Disability Rights South Carolina's publication on "Abuse, Neglect, & Exploitation: Definitions & Warning Signs" for more examples of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Anyone who knows that abuse, neglect, or exploitation has happened or will happen may report abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Any service provider who believes that abuse, neglect, or exploitation has happened or will happen, must report it. A report must be made to the following places:

If the report is about an adult with a disability who lives in a facility and:

- The facility or program is operated by the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) or the Department of Mental Health (DMH), call the Vulnerable Adult Investigation Unit of SLED (State Law Enforcement Division) toll-free at 1-866-200-6066 at any time. Facilities and residential programs

that have contracts with DDSN and DMH are also covered, including homes operated by county DSN boards and contractors such as the Babcock Center.

- The adult lives in any other facility, call the state Long Term Care Ombudsman's (LTCO) office toll-free at 1-800-868-9095 or 803-734-9900. After 5 pm and on weekends, leave a voice message. Contact information for the local ombudsman is available at:
<https://www.getcaresc.com/about/area-agencies-aging>
- More information about the LTCO office and about abuse and neglect is at <http://aging.sc.gov/programs/ombudsman/Pages/default.aspx>

If the report is about a child with a disability who lives at a facility (such as a psychiatric residential care facility – PRTF):

- Call the Out of Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN) division of the SC Department of Social Services toll-free at 1-803-898-7669 between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm and 1-800-645-9789 after hours. Contact information for county offices of the SC Department of Social Services is available at: <https://dss.sc.gov/contact/>. More information about OHAN and about child abuse and neglect is available at: <https://dss.sc.gov/abuseneglect/report-child-abuse-and-neglect/>.

In an emergency, call local law enforcement at 9-1-1. When making a report, give the name and location of the facility; the date and time the abuse took place; describe the abuse that took place; and leave your name and phone number, if you want.

To report the misuse of Medicaid funds, including financial exploitation of someone who is living in a facility and receiving Medicaid, call the SC Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Unit toll-free at 1-888-662-4328.

Note: To report abuse, neglect or exploitation of an adult or child who lives at home, call the county DSS office where the person lives. Telephone numbers for county DSS offices are found at <https://dss.sc.gov/contact> (select from list of counties).

This publication provides legal information, but is not intended to be legal advice. As the law may change, please contact Disability Rights SC for updates. Please let us know if you would like this information in an alternative format.

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¹ This fact sheet is based on the South Carolina Omnibus Adult Protection Act (SC Code of Laws, Section 43-35-5). The law is available at <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t43c035.php>

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