



Vulnerable Adult Investigations

I. INTRODUCTION

The Family Law Article, Title 14, mandates certain investigative procedures and coordination between law enforcement agencies and the Department of Social Services in the investigation of alleged abuse, neglect, exploitation or self-neglect of vulnerable adults.

The Ridgely Police Department has entered into an agreement with the Department of Social Services in Caroline County which defines the roles of the respective departments in the prompt reporting and investigation of suspected abuse of vulnerable adults.

II. DEFINITIONS

In Family Law Article, Title 14, the below listed definitions have been defined:

ABUSE - "Abuse" means the sustaining of any physical injury to a vulnerable adult as a result of a malicious act by any person.

EXPLOITATION - "Exploitation" means any action which involves the misuse of a vulnerable adult's funds, property, or person.

NEGLECT - "Neglect" means the willful deprivation of a vulnerable adult of adequate food, clothing, essential medical treatment or habilitative therapy, shelter, or supervision.

SELF-NEGLECT - "Self-Neglect" means the inability of a vulnerable adult to provide the vulnerable adult with the services;

1. that are necessary for the vulnerable adults physical and mental health; and,
2. the absence of which impairs or threatens the vulnerable adult's well being.

VULNERABLE ADULT - "Vulnerable Adult" means an adult who lacks the physical or mental capacity to provide the adult's daily needs.

General Order No. 6-1 (Cont.)

III. PROCEDURE

A. Whenever any member of this Department comes in contact with an alleged vulnerable adult, and has reason to believe that the alleged vulnerable adult has been subjected to abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation, will immediately notify the Department of Social Services. The investigating Officer will submit an appropriate report containing the below listed information:

1. The name, age, and home address of the vulnerable adult;
2. The name and home address of the person responsible for the care of the alleged vulnerable adult;
3. The whereabouts of the alleged vulnerable adult;
4. The nature of the alleged vulnerable adult's incapacity;
5. The nature and extent of the abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation of the alleged vulnerable adult, including evidence or information available to the Officer concerning previous injury possibly resulting from abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation;
6. Any other information that would help to determine the cause of the suspected abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation.

B. Conversely, whenever the Department of Social Services receives information of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult, they will immediately evaluate the seriousness of the potential abuse from the information received and then assign an adult protective service worker to make the initial inquiry into the validity of the reported violation. The adult protective worker will contact this Department when there is any indication of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an alleged vulnerable adult. The investigating Officer assigned to the case and the adult protective service worker will conduct a joint investigation into the matter.