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| Subject: Elder Abuse Reporting | | |
| Date Issued: 04-14-89 | Effective Date: 08-05-11 | Revision Number: 3 |

POLICY:

The Department will take all legal steps to ensure that the rights of the elderly are protected and that those who perpetrate crimes against the elderly are quickly identified and brought to justice.

DEFINITIONS:

Abuse – means the willful infliction on an elder person of physical pain or injury or unreasonable confinement.

Elder Person (for the purpose of reporting abuse) – means a person who is age 60 or older or who is subject to the infirmities of aging.

Elder Person (for the purpose of penalty enhancers) – means any person who is age 62 or older.

Infirmities – means organic brain damage caused by advanced age or other physical degeneration in connection therewith to the extent that the person so afflicted is substantially impaired in his or her ability to adequately provide for his or her care or custody.

Material abuse – the misuse of an elderly person’s property or financial resources.

Neglect – means a significant danger to an elder person’s physical or mental health because the person who takes care of the elder person is unable or fails to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or medical or dental care.

Self-neglect – Significant danger to an elder person’s physical or mental health because the elder person is responsible for his or her own care but is unable to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or medical or dental care.

METHOD:

The Department will utilize available community resources to promote a shared crime prevention responsibility within the community. This will include providing educational programs to reduce fear and the opportunity for victimization.

When a member determines that an incident involves abuse of an elder person as defined in the definitions section of this procedure, the matter shall be fully investigated and documented. If circumstances exist which threaten the older person’s health, safety or welfare, the member shall notify a supervisor and take any action necessary to safeguard the elderly person.

Department members are aware that many of the crimes against the elderly may be subtle or hidden. Family members, health care providers or fraudulent business people victimize many elderly persons. These crimes are equally serious and may result in the elderly being reluctant to fully participate in the activities of the community. Emphasis should be placed on victim assistance and sending a clear message that victimizing the elderly will not be tolerated.

Officers shall be alert to the quality of living conditions for the elderly. Members shall document substandard conditions to the appropriate agencies within the community

and in situations where the circumstances threaten the elder person's health, safety or welfare, immediate action should be taken to protect the person.

Department personnel will work in conjunction with Human Services and other outside agencies to provide the best possible protective service. Human Services has investigators that specialize in the investigation of elderly abuse. If a Human Services Investigator so requests, department personnel shall accompany the investigator during visits to the elder person's residence and shall provide other assistance as needed.

Reports of suspected abuse, material abuse, neglect or self-neglect and any other related documents are confidential and may not be released by the department, except under the exceptions listed under § 46.90 sec. 6 (1).

**RELATED
STATUTES:**

Wisconsin State Statute 46.90 – Elder Abuse Reporting System

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