



**Andy Beshear**  
GOVERNOR

## **CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES**

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**Statewide News Release**

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### **Gov. Beshear: Kentucky Recognizes World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**

*Purple flag display on Capitol grounds to represent reports of abuse*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 15, 2023)** – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear joined state officials and advocates in recognizing World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. A flag display was assembled on Capitol grounds, which will remain on display through June 30 to remind citizens to immediately report suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation.

“Seniors are valued members of our communities and it is our responsibility to ensure they live safe lives free from harm and exploitation,” said Gov. Beshear. “Kentuckians are encouraged to report elder abuse, neglect and exploitation when suspected. Elders should be treated with respect and dignity and protected against predators who seek to take advantage of them.”

During the event, the State Elder Abuse Committee presented its CHAMP – Champion of Adult Maltreatment Prevention – Award to Paul Troy, senior crime victim advocate of Jewish Family and Career Services, for his more than 20 years of work in raising awareness of adult maltreatment and advocacy on behalf of older adults who have been victims of crime or elder abuse.

June 15 marks the 18th annual celebration of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, in which the Governor has proclaimed June as Elder Abuse and Exploitation Awareness Month.

Additionally, the Governor announced the administration launched a social media campaign through the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) that will run for two months, bringing awareness to signs of abuse and how to report it.

“It is important that we recognize this day as we all have a role in elder abuse prevention,” said CHFS Secretary Eric Friedlander. “Today is a reminder that we must stay engaged with our communities so everyone knows how to identify, report and prevent elder abuse and neglect.”

Kentucky’s population includes 771,605 adults over age 65 years (estimate from 2022), and each year the Adult Protective Services Hotline receives an average of 19,864 reports alleging abuse,



neglect, exploitation or requesting general adult services for adults age 60 and older. Of that, an average of 7,277 investigations/assessments are completed each year. Resulting in nearly 40% of all calls meet screening criteria for an investigation/assessment.

Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) Acting Commissioner Lesa Dennis said that self-neglect is the most common type of referral for adults of all ages, about three times higher in adults over 60 years old.

“Elder abuse, neglect and exploitation is not something to be quiet about, and especially since some elders cannot speak for themselves, we all have a responsibility to report it,” Dennis said. “With our partners across the state, DCBS is committed to keeping our most vulnerable adults safe. We all can be a part of establishing their health and well-being. We can save lives.”

In 2022, DCBS’ Adult Protection Services Branch launched its new adult maltreatment [website](#), which includes research, signs of abuse and exploitation and contact information for those abuse prevention councils that do the grassroots work in education and prevention.

Another CHFS agency, the Department for Aging and Independent Living (DAIL), coordinates statewide programs and services on behalf of Kentucky elders and individuals with disabilities. DAIL Commissioner and State Elder Abuse Committee Co-Chair Victoria Elridge said protecting older and vulnerable adults is a community responsibility.

“We proudly wear purple and plant purple flags on behalf of and alongside the older adults in Kentucky who need us to stand with them in our movement of prevention and protection,” she said. “Engaging and empowering older adults gives them the support they need to advocate for themselves and their communities so they may achieve the best possible quality of life. We do this through both our efforts today and the ongoing services DAIL and its partners across the state provide throughout the year.

Find information about DAIL’s programs and services for adults who are older or who have disabilities, including free meals, caregiver support services and long-term care information, [here](#).

To join the effort in elder abuse prevention, Kentuckians can join one of the state’s 24 Local Coordinated Councils on Elder Abuse, which provides elder abuse education and outreach at the local and regional levels depending on the needs of the communities. Kentucky’s network involves local law enforcement, county officials, advocates, nursing homes, local businesses, social service agencies and individuals. They share a common goal of ending abuse, neglect and exploitation of the elderly in their communities by offering specific advocacy, outreach and prevention strategies. To find your community’s council, visit [here](#).

Reporting suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation is the law in Kentucky, and it’s confidential. The toll-free reporting hotline is 1-877-597-2331 or 1-877-KYSAFE1. If you believe there is imminent risk, immediately call 911 or local law enforcement. For information about signs of elder abuse, neglect and financial exploitation to review and share, visit [here](#).

You can find local resources to support all Kentuckians, [here](#).

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Information on how the state is working to improve the lives and health of our people is available at [CHFS.ky.gov](http://CHFS.ky.gov). Follow the cabinet on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).