Telemarketing Fraud

It can be challenging to tell if a telemarketing call is legitimate. This is especially true if you are pressured to make an instant decision. Scams can range from prize offers to travel packages to phony charities.

Be wary of telemarketing sales pitches such as these or other scams:

- "You have won a lottery, but to claim the money, you must send a payment to pay the taxes on the money you have won."
- "We can give you a great home loan at a great price, regardless of your credit."
- "We are offering you a fantastic buy on your favorite magazines; this is the last day and we must receive your money by midnight to guarantee this offer."
- "You have a tax refund; verify your personal information to claim the money."
- Grandparent scam: person poses as grandchild without stating their name and asks for money right away to get out of jail, buy a plane ticket home, etc.
- Bank is calling to verify your personal information for security purposes.
- Letter stating you won a trip, money, car, or "just call this number."

How to Protect Yourself from Financial Elder Abuse

- Don't sign blank checks allowing another person to fill in the amount.
- Don't give strangers access to your bank accounts.
- Check your financial statements frequently and carefully for unauthorized withdrawals.
- Don't be pressured by family members, friends, caregivers, or anyone to do anything you don't want to do.
- Don't leave money or valuables in plain view.
- Be aware of scams (either by phone, email or regular mail). If it sounds too good to be true; it probably is.
- NEVER give out your personal information to anyone on a telephone or email pitch, hang up the phone and call a family member/friend to help determine the validity of the calls.

If you suspect an elder or dependent adult is being financially abused, please contact us at:

Division of Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
Phone: (916) 559-6180 | Hotline: (800) 722-0432
Email: *DMFEAoutreach@doj.ca.gov*

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Revised 10/24

DMFEA WEBSITE

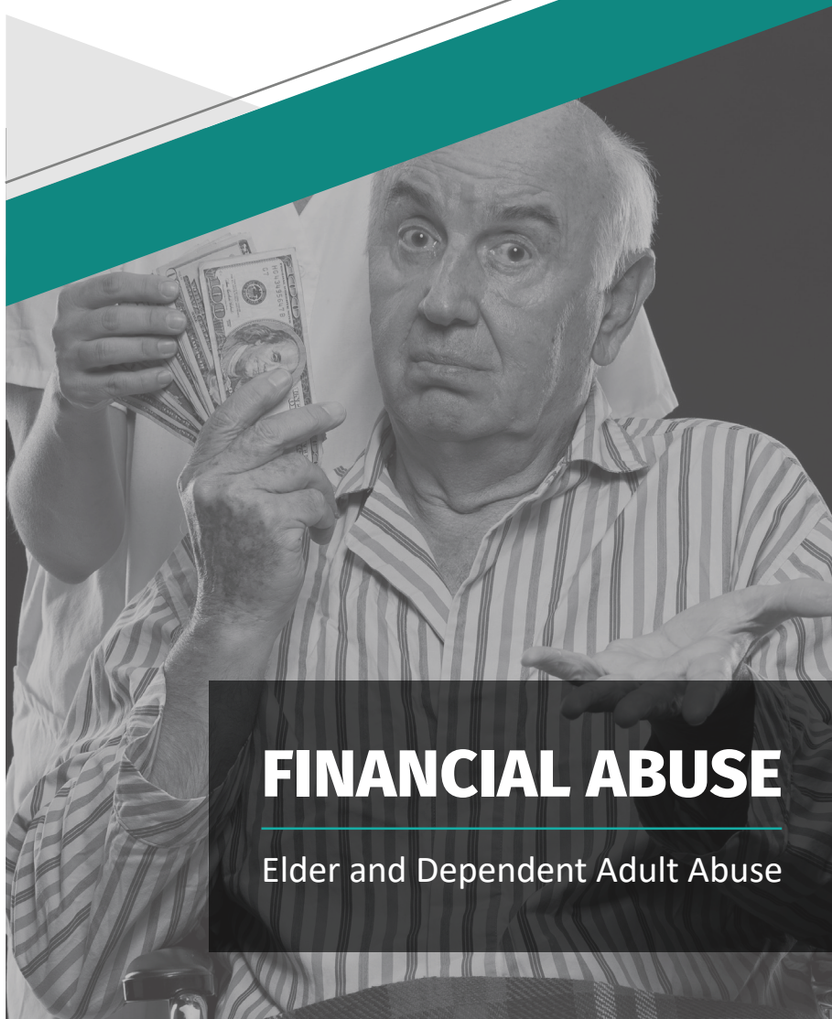
https://oag.ca.gov/dmfea

INVESTIGATE PROSECUTE PROTECT

DMFEA

Division of Medi-Cal Fraud & Elder Abuse

State of California Department of Justice



FINANCIAL ABUSE

Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse

What is Financial Abuse of an Elder or Dependent Adult?

A Dependent Adult is someone who is between the ages of 18 and 64 years who has physical or mental limitations that restrict his or her ability to carry out normal activities or to protect his or her rights.

An Elder is someone aged 65 years or older.

Financial abuse of an elder or dependent adult is any theft or embezzlement of money or any other property from an elder or dependent adult. This is a serious form of abuse as it can leave victims unable to provide for their needs and fearful of what tomorrow will hold. Some examples of financial elder abuse are:

- Stealing money, jewelry, or personal possessions.
- Intercepting cash or checks.
- Fraudulently convincing an elder or dependent adult to hand over money and/or personal belongings.
- Telemarketing fraud.
- Identity theft.
- Predatory lending and home sale scams.
- Home improvement scams.
- Not paying for share of the cost of nursing homes.
- Befriending an elder for elaborate gifts (cars, trips, loans, etc.).
- Power-of-Attorney fraud.



RECOGNIZING

The Warning Signs

Signs and Symptoms of Financial Abuse:

- Significant withdrawals from the elder or dependent adult's accounts.
- Sudden changes in the elder or dependent adult's financial condition.
- Items or cash missing from the elder or dependent adult's household.
- Adding additional names on a bank signature card.
- Unpaid bills despite having enough money.
- Providing unnecessary services or subscriptions.
- Unapproved withdrawals of funds using an ATM card.
- Unexplained sudden transfer of assets.
- Elder signs over their will to a neighbor or friend.
- A stranger who begins a new close relationship and offers to manage the elder's finances and assets.
- Family members or caregivers isolate the elder or dependent adult, restricting the their contact with others.

Examples of Financial Abuse include:

- Cashing checks without authorization/permission.
- Forging an elder or dependent adult's signature.
- Misusing or stealing an elder or dependent adult's money or possessions.
- Coercing or deceiving an elder or dependent adult into signing documents such as a contract or will.
- Improper use of conservatorship, guardianship, or power-of-attorney.

Who might be an abuser:

- Family members – may commit financial abuse out of a sense of entitlement.
- Caretakers – may persuade a client to give them money, or steal valuables from the client's home or room.
- Neighbors – sometimes have the opportunity to steal from the elderly or dependent adults, particularly if they frequently perform chores for them.
- Professionals – lawyers, bankers, financial advisors and others find ways to cheat the elderly and dependent adults by engaging in deceptive billing practices or by embezzling funds.