

When making a report of abuse or neglect of an older adult or adult with a disability, it is important to gather all of the information that you will need prior to the call so you will have it at hand to give to the person making the report. Having to stop and gather information can be frustrating and cause you more anxiety, and connecting again with the same report taker may take additional time. You might even have to start over with giving your report.

Listed below are some details you should consider before making your report. Gather all of the information that you have about the situation before you make the report, including:

Name

What is the person's name if you know it, even if all you have is a first or last name, or nickname? If you do not initially know the alleged victim's name but can get it without arousing suspicion, obtain it for the call. The more information you can provide, the better job the investigator can do.

Address or location

Where did you see the abuse or where was it reported to have taken place? In addition, what address is the alleged victim at now? If you don't have a specific address, be prepared to describe where they can be located. For example, what street has the victim been seen on frequently, if they are currently unhoused. Where is the alleged victim during the day? For example, does the alleged victim attend adult day health care, dialysis, or a work program during the day?

Date or date observed

The date the abuse occurred.

Other witnesses or parties involved

Are there other witnesses who observed or were told about the abuse when you were? Are there family members who could be contacted, friends, neighbors, or caregivers? If you have contact information for any of these people, be prepared to share it so that the investigator can contact them if they need to.

Age

How old is the alleged victim? If you know an exact age or date of birth, have this information ready to provide. If not, make an estimate of how old you think they are. Even if you are wrong about their age, your description may help identify them.

Any injuries you observed or were told about

In some situations, you may see or be shown injuries that are suspicious, while in others you may just hear about them. Be prepared to report what you know or heard. Provide details about any injuries you observed, as well as how old you might guess they are. Injuries fade over time and the investigator will need to know what to look for and perhaps to be able to distinguish from the injury you saw and any new injuries that may have been inflicted.

Additional risk factors

Sometimes there are additional risk factors involved such as: the alleged physical abuse perpetrator will return home from a trip tomorrow, the alleged sexual abuser will be caring for the alleged victim on Friday, the victim is being evicted in two days, or the financial abuser will take ownership of the house this week. All of these details can be crucial to protecting those who have been or could be victimized.

Relevant medical information

If you are aware of the alleged victim's relevant medical history and/or medications, this information may be important to the investigation.