

Adult Protective Services (APS) – Expansions to Services



California Legislation AB135 Brings Changes to APS Services

What is APS?

California's APS program provides services without regard to income to older adults and people with disabilities who are victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

APS in Alameda County

Each county's APS system provides client-directed services with the least-restrictive approach to care and support remedies, and include the following: response to and investigation of all reports of known or suspected abuse and neglect; 24-hour emergency response system; time-limited case management services; emergency shelter/in-home protection, tangible resources like food and transportation; multidisciplinary teams; prosecution assistance; public education and awareness.

How to Access Services

To report known or suspected abuse or neglect, call: 510-577-3500 or 1-866-CALL-APS.

What's New to APS in 2022

Age Eligibility: Adult Protective Services (APS) are now available to adults aged 60 and older, and dependent adults age 18-59 who are functionally impaired and unable to meet their own needs. With AB135, passed in June 2021, APS services have expanded from being available to older adults age 65 and older to age 60 and older. The policy change became effective January 1, 2022.

Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT): MDT are meetings where different disciplines come together to examine cases, share resources, and provide education/training. These meetings are facilitated by APS and can include (but not limited to), law enforcement, health practitioners, district attorneys, public administrators or conservators, and county counsel. AB135 directs counties to include housing representatives on the MDT.

Mandated Reporters: Mandated reporters include social workers, police officers, teachers, and health practitioners (medical and non-medical). AB135 includes In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) workers as mandated reporters.

Definition of Neglect: AB135 expands the definition of neglect to include older adults or people with disabilities who cannot manage their finances or satisfy their needs due to poor cognitive or physical health.

Case Management System: AB135 initiates a stakeholder group that will explore crafting an automated APS case management or data warehouse system. This could allow for assessing local and statewide trends and share data between counties.

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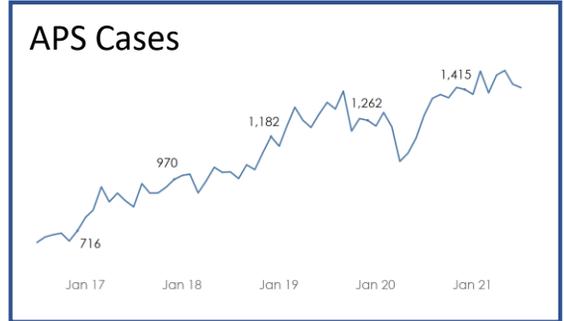
Abuse, Neglect, and Equity

APS caseloads have steadily risen year over year – with cases nearly doubling between January 2017 and January 2021. As AB135 increased eligibility for services based on age, we can anticipate that these trends will amplify, and the need for additional caseworkers and a wider network of care will grow.

Services for older adults continue to be in an ever growing need, as in the last eight years, there has been a 39% increase in the Alameda County population aged 65 and older with a disability and living with an income below the Federal Poverty Level (\$13,950 for an individual in 2022). Currently, 63% of APS clients have an income below \$25,000 year. Abuse, neglect and exploitation occur across the income spectrum, but the need for supportive services is more acute for those with fewer resources.

Racial equity is a particular concern with many human services programs, as historically marginalized populations are over-represented in programs serving those who experience abuse or neglect, regardless of age. In Alameda County, 66.2% of APS clients identify as a race/ethnicity other than white, compared to 50.7% of the County at large. This disparity is most evident for those who identify as Black, accounting for 27.7% of APS cases, but only 11% of the larger County population.

In addition to the disproportionality of marginalized populations in APS services, there is also a significant difference in the type of abuse, neglect, or exploitation experienced. Non-white clients are more likely to be victims of abuse or exploitation, while white clients have a higher representation in cases of self-neglect. These differences indicate the impact of institutional racism on people of color, and the need for culturally competent services.



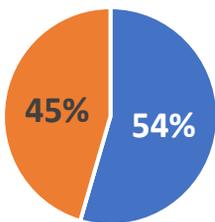
In Alameda County, 4 in 5 APS clients under the age of 50 identify as non-white or multiple races/ethnicities

COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionality impacted older adults, with 75% of deaths occurring in individuals aged 65 or older¹. Social distancing is an effective strategy to limit exposure to the virus, but isolation is a risk factor for abuse. Older persons' pandemic-related financial strain was associated with an increased risk of abuse². The federal COVID stimulus bills included the first-ever federal funding specifically for state APS programs. However, these were one-time grants. Ongoing federal and increased state funding is needed to continue to address the need of vulnerable older adults.

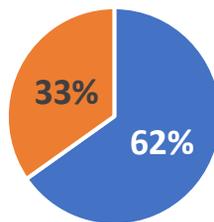
References: 1: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, December 2021
2: Chang, E-Shien and Becca Levy. "High Prevalence of Elder Abuse During the COVID-19 Pandemic" The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, November 2021

Self-Neglect



■ People of Color
■ White

All Other Allegations



■ People of Color
■ White