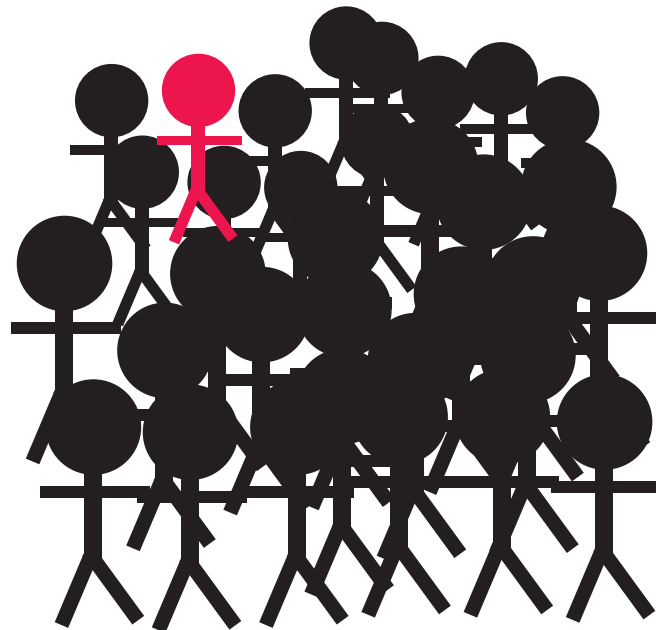


Spot abuse and report it

Spot abuse and report it



South Carolinians **with mental illness and developmental disabilities** who live in facilities deserve to be free of the crimes of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

South Carolina has a new way to handle reports of abuse of people with mental illness and developmental disabilities who live in facilities. The South Carolina State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) has set up a new statewide toll free number that is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

24/7

You could help end someone's nightmare

1-866-200-6066

SLED investigates when there is reasonable suspicion of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a person living in a facility operated by or contracted for operation by the Department of Mental Health (DMH) or the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN). SLED refers reports of non-criminal problems, such as violations of residents' rights, to the state's Long Term Care Ombudsman, the Department of Social Services, or the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit for investigation and further action.

If you spot abuse of people with disabilities, report it immediately.

What are abuse, neglect, and exploitation?

- **Abuse**
includes physical or sexual assault, including slapping, pushing, hitting, kicking, having sexual contact, or using medication as a means of control. It also includes psychological abuse such as threats, harassment, or other forms of intimidating behavior that causes serious emotional harm.
- **Neglect**
includes failure to provide adequate food, housing, medicine, or supervision.
- **Exploitation**
includes taking advantage of the person or mishandling the person's money.

Who must report abuse, neglect, and exploitation?

- **Any person with actual knowledge**
of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an adult living in a DDSN or DMH facility or contract facility must report directly to SLED.
- **Any person with reason to believe**
that abuse, neglect, or exploitation has occurred or may occur must also report directly to SLED.

Reports must be made within 24 hours or at least by the next working day. Failure to report is a crime. Professionals can also be subject to discipline by their licensing boards.

Who investigates abuse, neglect, and exploitation?

- **SLED**
investigates or refers to local law enforcement abuse, neglect, or exploitation in a residential facility contracted with or operated by DDSN or DMH.
1-866-200-6066
- **SC Long Term Care Ombudsman's Office**
investigates other residential facilities, such as private nursing homes and most community residential care facilities.
1-800-868-9095
<http://www.state.sc.us/lsgov/aging/Seniors/Ombudsman.htm>
- **SC Department of Social Services**
investigates abuse, neglect, or exploitation of vulnerable adults in private or foster homes. Reports should be made to county DSS offices. Suspicions of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child should also be reported to DSS.
State DSS Adult Protective Services: 803-898-7318
Local phone numbers can be found in the blue pages of phone books or www.state.sc.us/dss/counties.html
- **SC Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit**
investigates misuse of Medicaid funds, including financial exploitation of Medicaid recipients.
1-888-662-4328

In an emergency, call your local law enforcement (911).

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If you suspect abuse, neglect, or exploitation, report immediately.