



2016 WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Tips to Avoid Elder Abuse Prepare and Be Aware!

Prepare: get your estate plan in place. Talk with an attorney about helping you create the following as appropriate:

- A living will. The Five Wishes living will is one popular example, visit www.agingwithdignity.org
- A revocable trust
- Durable power of attorney for healthcare and/or asset management. Name a person you trust to make healthcare and asset management decisions for you if you are incapable. Designating co-powers of attorney can ensure that no one agent can act unilaterally.

Be aware:

- Learn about the types of elder abuse and neglect and associated warning signs (see National Center on Elder Abuse website to learn more):
www.ncea.aoa.gov/ncearoot/Main_Site/pdf/publication/NCEA_WhatIsAbuse-2010.pdf)
- Learn about current frauds and scams at www.stopfraud.gov/protect.html
- If your family member is in care in a facility or has an in-home caregiver, check on him/her frequently and be involved with the care

Protect Yourself!

- Get on the National Do Not Call Registry to reduce telemarketing calls. Visit www.donotcall.gov or call **888-382-1222** to register your phone number.
- If you are offered a “prize”, “loan”, “investment”, etc., that sounds too good to be true, it probably is too good to be true....avoid it. Also, you should never have to pay for a “free” prize.
- Consult with someone you trust before making a large purchase or investment....don't be pressured or intimidated into immediate decisions.
- Don't sign any documents that you don't completely understand without first consulting an attorney or a family member you trust.
- Don't provide personal information (e.g. social security number, credit card) over the phone unless you placed the call and know with whom you are speaking.

- Tear up or shred credit card receipts, bank statements, and financial records before disposing of them in the trash. Monitor your bank and credit card statements regularly for signs of any possible fraud.
- If you hire someone for personal assistance services, in-home care services, etc., ensure that they have been properly screened with criminal background checks completed. Ask for certifications when appropriate.
- Keep in touch with others; isolation can make you more vulnerable.
- Get caller ID on your phone, and only pick up if you recognize the caller...allow others to go to the answering machine (people trying to sell you something or scam you will not leave a message) – you can always call the person back if it is somebody you want to speak to.
- Don't give in to family members who are asking for financial assistance you can't provide...get help if the individuals become threatening.