

Mandatory Reporting of Elder Abuse

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Issue

Provide information on Connecticut's elder abuse reporting requirements and statutory penalties.

Mandatory Reporting of Elder Abuse

The law requires certain professionals (i.e. mandated reporters) to report suspected abuse, neglect, abandonment, or exploitation of the elderly to the Department of Social Services (DSS) within 72 hours. They must also report to the department if they suspect an elderly person needs protective services (CGS §§ [17a-412](#) and [17b-451](#)). Under the Protective Services for the Elderly program, DSS staff investigate abuse complaints of individuals age 60 and older living in the community and provide them with any needed protective services. If the investigation confirms the abuse, the case is referred to the state's attorney for investigation and possible prosecution. According to DSS, in 2017, the program handled 7,197 elder abuse cases that included physical, emotional, or self-neglect or financial exploitation. Mandated reporters are listed in Attachment 1 below.

A mandated reporter who fails to report the abuse to DSS within the 72-hour deadline can be fined up to \$500. If the failure to report is intentional, the reporter can be charged with a Class C misdemeanor (up to three months imprisonment, a fine of up to \$500, or both) for the first offense and a Class A misdemeanor (up to one year imprisonment, a fine of up to \$2,000, or both) for any subsequent offense (CGS §§ [17a-412](#) and [17b-451](#)). Attachment 2 lists statutory penalties for crimes pertaining to elder abuse and neglect.

The law also requires any institution, organization, agency, or facility that employs people to care for seniors ages 60 and older to (1) provide mandatory training on detecting potential elder abuse and (2) inform employees of their obligation to report such incidences ([CGS § 17b-451](#)).

Attachment 1: Mandated Elder Abuse Reporters

Profession	Mandated Reporters	
Health Care Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • licensed physicians and surgeons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resident physicians and interns at any hospital in the state
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registered and licensed practical nurses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chiropractors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dentists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medical examiners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • optometrists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pharmacists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical therapists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • podiatrists
Long-Term Care Facility Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long-term care facility administrators, staff, and anyone paid to care for a long-term care facility patient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nurse's aides or orderlies working in a nursing home
Behavioral Health Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • domestic violence counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • psychologists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sexual assault counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social workers
Public Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • licensed or certified emergency medical services (EMS) providers (i.e., EMS responders, technicians, and advanced technicians) and any of these professional who are members of a municipal fire department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • police officers
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anyone paid to care for an elderly person by any institution, organization, or agency (e.g., adult day center, congregate housing facility, home care agency, homemaker-companion agency, or senior center) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • patient advocates (except for representatives of the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clergymen 	

Attachment 2: Statutory Penalties for Elder Abuse and Neglect Crimes

Statute	Type	Class	Name	Jail Time	Fine
53a-59a	Felony	B	1 st Degree Assault – Victim Elderly* or Other**	5 to 20 years	Up to \$15,000
53a-60b	Felony	D	2 nd Degree Assault – Victim Elderly or Other	2 to 5 years	Up to \$5,000
53a-60c	Felony	D	2 nd Degree Assault With Firearm – Victim Elderly or Other	3 to 5 years	Up to \$5,000
53a-61a	Misdemeanor	A	3 rd Degree Assault – Victim Elderly or Other	1 year	Up to \$2,000
53a-63	Misdemeanor	A	1 st Degree Reckless Endangerment (not limited to seniors)	Up to 1 year	Up to \$2,000
53a-64	Misdemeanor	B	2 nd Degree Reckless Endangerment (not limited to seniors)	Up to six months	Up to \$1,000
53a-321	Felony	C	1 st Degree Abuse of Elderly or Other	Up to 10 years	Up to \$10,000
53a-322	Felony	D	2 nd Degree Abuse of Elderly or Other	Up to 5 years	Up to \$5,000
53a-323	Misdemeanor	A	3 rd Degree Abuse of Elderly or Other	Up to 1 year	Up to \$2,000
53-20	Felony	D	Cruelty to Person (not limited to seniors)	Up to 5 years	Up to \$5,000

*Elderly means an individual age 60 or older

** Other includes pregnant women and individuals who are blind or have a disability, including intellectual disability

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