



## COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION  
DRIVE, ROOM 102A  
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

### SUMMARY REPORT

---

**Agenda Date:** 6/3/2025

---

**To:** Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Human Services, District Attorney, Sheriff's Office

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Angela Struckmann 707-565-5800, Carla Rodriguez 707-565-2311, Connie Newton 707-565-8884

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisory District(s):** Countywide

#### **Recommended Action:**

Adopt a Gold Resolution proclaiming June 2025 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month in Sonoma County.

#### **Executive Summary:**

The Sonoma County Human Services Department requests that the Board of Supervisors designate June 2025 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month in Sonoma County.

#### **Discussion:**

Addressing elder and dependent adult abuse in Sonoma County requires a collective approach between county departments and community agencies. No single organization can provide all necessary services to adequately address and mitigate elder and dependent adult abuse in our community. Older adults aged 60+ account for 27% of Sonoma County's total population, a number that is projected to increase to 33% by 2030. The urgency and complexity of reports are also growing as social workers and public health nurses assist victims of abuse who have been impacted by the county's collective trauma from fires, public safety power shutoffs, limited access to affordable housing, and the COVID-19 pandemic that disproportionately harmed older and other at-risk adults.

The Human Services Department Adult and Aging division works in collaboration with key community partners to strengthen the safety net of community-based services and supports through increased education and awareness to help prevent elder and dependent adult abuse. The following agencies work collaboratively to prevent and address abuse in our community:

#### **Adult Protective Services**

APS is responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect for older and dependent adults living in the community and receives reports of suspected abuse via its 24-hour hotline (707-565-5940 or 800-667-0404) and secure web form at <https://sonoma.leapsportal.net/Intake/NewPublicIntakeReport.aspx>. Reports to APS have gone from 5,174 in 2018 to 7,149 in 2024, representing a 38% increase. APS also provides mandated reporter training to organizations like hospitals and collaborates with community partners to provide outreach and education to older adults. APS partners with multiple organizations and with other Adult and Aging division programs to address the needs of older adults and people with disabilities living in our community.

#### **Long-Term Care Ombudsman**

The Senior Advocacy Services Ombudsman Program had a significant year in 2024, responding to 967 reports of elder abuse and neglect in licensed facilities. Of these, 402 were classified as cases of abuse, neglect, or

exploitation. In addition to handling these reports, the program's staff and volunteers provided 10,796 information and referral consultations to long-term care residents and the broader community. They also conducted 18 community presentations, which focused on important topics like current frauds and scams, mandated reporting, and other issues affecting aging populations. This demonstrates the program's crucial role in advocating for and supporting the rights and safety of older adults in the region.

### **District Attorney's Office**

The Sonoma County District Attorney's (DA's) office works closely with APS, law enforcement and other community organizations to ensure that elder abuse investigations and prosecutions are prioritized and that elder crime victims are treated with dignity. The DA's office has assigned a chief deputy district attorney, two full-time deputy district attorneys, a district attorney investigator, and an elder advocate to the DA's Elder Protection Unit.

During the last year, two elder abuse cases that went to trial demonstrate the variety of ways in which elderly members of our community can be victimized, as well as the types of cases being handled by the DA's Elder Protection Unit. In one case, an elderly and disabled woman invested both her life savings and the proceeds from a reverse mortgage - more than 1.5 million dollars - with someone she trusted. But, instead of investing the victim's money, the defendant funded her own lavish lifestyle and made "interest" payments to other "investors" she was also stealing from in a Ponzi scheme. At the conclusion of the trial, the defendant was convicted of 23 felony charges for elder theft and money laundering. In another case, an armed man in the parking lot of a Santa Rosa grocery store tried to steal two separate elderly victims' cars. Following trial, the defendant was convicted of two separate violations of attempted carjacking, assault with a deadly weapon, elder abuse, and making criminal threats.

Members of the Elder Protection Unit participate on the Financial Abuse Specialist Team and the Elder & Dependent Adult Multidisciplinary Team meetings. When elders or dependent adults in our community are targeted by criminals, the DA's office and law enforcement partners aggressively pursue justice in the criminal courts. The goals of prosecution include holding the offender accountable, obtaining protective orders to help keep elder victims safe, and pursuing court-ordered restitution. Attorneys and investigators conduct home visits to prepare victims for court, and elder advocates accompany and support victims through the court process. The DA's office also helps elder victims secure counseling and other services in a safe, trauma-informed environment.

### **Sheriff's Office**

The Sheriff's Office takes elder abuse very seriously and is committed to participate in collaborative efforts to ensure older and dependent adults are safe and supported. The Sheriff's Office aggressively investigates allegations of elder abuse and works with the DA's office to bring those guilty of preying on older adults to justice.

### **Prior Board Actions:**

Adopted Gold Resolutions proclaiming Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month in Sonoma County:

June 6, 2024

---

June 6, 2023

June 13, 2022

---

**Agenda Date:** 6/3/2025

---

June 16, 2016

June 9, 2015

June 10, 2014

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 24-25 Adopted</b>	<b>FY 25-26 Adopted</b>	<b>FY 26-27 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

None

<b>Staffing Impacts:</b>			
<b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b>	<b>Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)</b>	<b>Additions (Number)</b>	<b>Deletions (Number)</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

None

**Attachments:**

Resolution

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

None