



COUNTY OF SONOMA

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

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 6/2/2026

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Names: 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

Supervisorial Districts: Countywide

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Gold Resolution proclaiming June 2026 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month in Sonoma County.

Executive Summary:

The Sonoma County Human Services Department, the District Attorney, and the Sheriff's Office request that the Board of Supervisors designate June 2026 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month in Sonoma County.

Discussion:

Addressing the growing issue of elder and dependent adult abuse in Sonoma County requires a collective approach between County departments, community agencies, and the public. No single agency can provide all the care and services needed 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.

Adult Protective Services (APS) reports of suspected elder and dependent adult abuse have gone from 6,029 in 2022 to 8,130 in 2025, representing a 35% increase in reports. From 2024 to 2025 alone, APS reports increased by 14% (7,149 to 8,130) surpassing forecasted increases over a year earlier than expected.

The urgency and complexity of cases has also grown. Social workers and public health nurses continue to support victims of abuse who are experiencing compounding challenges at a very vulnerable time. These challenges include affordable and appropriate housing, reductions to vital safety net and community resources, and the continued rise in the cost of living.

The Human Services Department (HSD) Adult and Aging division works in collaboration with key community partners to strengthen the safety net of community-based services 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 for elder and dependent adults living in the community. APS receives reports of suspected abuse via its 24-hour hotline (707-565-5940 or 800-667-0404) and secure [web intake form](#). APS provides mandated reporter training and collaborates with community partners to

provide outreach and education to older adults. In 2025, APS provided six mandated reporter trainings and two ad-hoc community trainings.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman

In 2025, the Senior Advocacy Services (SAS) Ombudsman Program in Sonoma County was significantly impacted by a federal change in how cases were counted and recorded. As a result, reported numbers appear lower than in 2024, but this reflects the change in methodology rather than an actual decline in cases. In 2025, SAS responded to 572 reports of elder abuse and neglect in licensed facilities compared to 967 in 2024. Of the 572 reports investigated, 262 were classified as cases of gross abuse, neglect, or exploitation. In addition to handling these reports, the program's staff and volunteers provided 12,771 information and referral consultations to long-term care residents and the broader community, with volunteers contributing 1,348 hours. They also conducted 17 community presentations, which focused on important topics like current frauds and scams, mandated reporting, and other issues affecting aging populations. The program plays a 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) 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.

Members of the Elder Protection Unit participate on the Financial Abuse Specialist Team and the Elder & Dependent Adult Multidisciplinary Team meetings. The DA's office also participated in Sonoma County's Elder Justice Coalition Speakers Group, by speaking to elder members of the community, elder advocates, and other public service organizations to educate them about the risks of fraud, undue influence, physical and social isolation, assault, and neglect. When elders or dependent adults in our community are targeted by criminals, the DA's office and law enforcement partners aggressively pursue justice for them 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.

The DA has worked closely with HSD to provide legal services aimed at maintaining elder safety and has hired an elder advocate, located at the Family Justice Center, to help guide elder victims to critical community resources regardless of the outcome of the criminal investigations. As a result of these and other collaborative efforts, more elders in Sonoma County are receiving the security, services, and support they need to lead safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

Sheriff's Office

The Sheriff's Office takes elder abuse very seriously and has signed a commitment to the Sonoma County Elder Justice Coalition to help improve justice for elders, and 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 the elderly to justice.

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Prior Board Actions:

Resolutions have been approved proclaiming June as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month in Sonoma County every year from 2014 - 2018 and 2021-2025.

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

None.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None.

Attachments:

Resolution

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

None