DSHS WASHINGTON STATE Department of Social and Health Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) Investigations Fact Sheet

Adult Protective Services (APS) is investigating a report that you might have abused, abandoned, financially exploited, or neglected a vulnerable adult. This document informs you of the investigation process, your rights, and other important information. As part of the investigation, APS will review records and interview people about the allegation(s).

The outcome of the investigation could have serious consequences for you. Please read this carefully.

The investigator assigned to your case is:
They can be reached at:

What rights do I have?

- You have the right to have a third party (such as a friend, attorney, union representative, family member, or guardian) with you during the interview.
- If English is not your primary language, you have the right to a free interpreter (APS is not allowed to use family members as interpreters).
- You have the right to not participate in the interview, to stop, or reschedule it.
- You have the right to provide APS with documents or witnesses related to the allegations.

How will APS notify me of the outcome of the investigation?

- APS makes a decision based upon evidence that APS gathers during the investigation. The types of decisions APS makes are:
  - **Substantiated**: More likely than not the alleged incident occurred
  - **Unsubstantiated**: More likely than not the alleged incident did not occur
  - **Inconclusive**: Cannot determine whether or not the alleged incident occurred.
- If APS finds that it is more likely than not that the incident occurred, APS will notify you by sending you a letter by certified and regular mail.
- If APS finds that it is more likely than not that the incident did not occur, APS will notify you verbally. APS can provide you a letter if you ask.
- If APS cannot determine whether or not the incident occurred, APS will notify you verbally. APS can provide you a letter if you ask.
- If APS does not have your current address, you may miss important mail and deadlines.

What does a substantiated finding mean?

If APS decides the allegations of abuse, neglect, abandonment, or financial exploitation are “substantiated”, you can request a hearing if you disagree with the finding. If the APS decision is upheld at the end of the hearing process, your name will be placed on a registry.

Being on the registry means you may not be able to work or volunteer anywhere you might have unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults or children. There is currently no way to get your name off the registry.

Can I challenge an APS decision?

- If APS decides the alleged incident is **unsubstantiated** or **inconclusive** you do not need to do anything.
- If APS decides the alleged incident is **substantiated** and you do not agree you may request a hearing. The APS letter will tell you how.

To request a hearing, you only have until 5:00 p.m. on the 30th calendar day after the date the department’s letter of notice is mailed or personally served upon you, whichever occurs first.

For More Information

You can get more information about APS online at https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/adult-protective-services-aps.