

## 2014 Supplemental Budget

### PROTECT VULNERABLE ADULTS

Request	FY14	FY15	13-15
FTE	0	42.0	21
GF-State	\$0	\$3,134,000	\$3,134,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4,680,000</b>	<b>\$4,680,000</b>

#### DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY

The Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (AL TSA) requests 21.0 FTE and \$4,680,000 Total Funds (\$3,134,000 GF-State) to keep up with the increased number of allegations of vulnerable adult abuse and neglect. By funding this request, allegations will be responded in a more timely fashion, which will help keep vulnerable people safe.

#### PROBLEM STATEMENT

Residential Care Services (RCS) residential investigator staffing levels, based on the number of facilities, have not kept pace with the increasing number of allegations of abuse. At the same time, allegations and investigations for in-home abuse and neglect assigned to Adult Protective Services (APS) investigators have far outpaced the staff increases generated by the Maintenance Level workload model. In addition, the complexity of investigations has increased with more time-intensive financial exploitation cases now representing nearly one third of all investigations.

The department cannot investigate all of the complaints assigned as mandated under RCW 74.34; therefore, AL TSA prioritizes the complaints with a triage process. Cases that appear to involve higher risk for residents/clients are worked before those that appear to involve less risk. This puts some vulnerable adults at risk until more investigators are hired.

From 2008 to 2012, APS has experienced a 35 percent increase in cases reported, a 25 percent increase in cases assigned (investigations), and a 30 percent increase in allegations investigated (one case may contain multiple allegations). Staffing increases have averaged less than 9 percent during this period. The 2013-15 budget assumed a 3 percent increase in complaints, but the last two years have seen complaints increasing at 8 percent and 9 percent. Even after hiring 15 non-permanent staff in late 2012, the changes in amount, type and scope of APS activities have led to investigative caseloads that are 1:27, which is far too high to manage in a timely and quality manner. The percentage of cases open longer than 90 days remains at 19 percent as of July 2013.

Between 2002 and 2012, complaints increased by 56 percent, from 23,000 to 36,000, for both Resident Client Protection Program (RCPP) and provider practice to the centralized intake Complaint Resolution Unit (CRU). There is no Maintenance Level workload adjustment for RCS investigators or set ratio of investigators to the number of complaints or investigations.

## 2014 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

### PROTECT VULNERABLE ADULTS

#### PROPOSED SOLUTION

To ensure that AL TSA is able to meet its obligations under 74.34 RCW related to timely, accurate and thorough responses to allegations of abuse, neglect, abandonment and exploitation of vulnerable adults, the request is to fund appropriate staffing ratios for investigators and improved quality assurance oversight.

An APS staffing ratio of 1:22 investigators to open cases will allow APS to complete timely and thorough investigations and reduce the cases open longer than 90 days from the current 19 percent down to the target of 11 percent by January 2015.

Instituting RCS staffing ratios of 1:25 investigators to new complaints per month for Nursing Homes, and 1:22 for supported living provider practice allegations and RCPP (investigating a named individual rather than a facility's practices) in all settings will ensure enough investigators to complete investigations in a timely and thorough manner. (Note: Supported Living provider practice and RCPP investigators will be funded separately through provider fees as proposed in HB 1574.)

In addition, increased quality assurance, including IT support staff, will provide meaningful reports to assess quality standards and trends in order to make improvements to the investigation process; identify training needs; ensure staff are properly trained; assess compliance with state statutes; address policy needs and deficiencies; and identify performance issues.

#### EXPECTED RESULTS

Adding investigators will improve the safety net for vulnerable adults in all settings. AL TSA investigators will complete thorough and timely investigations. By January 2015, the number of APS cases open longer than 90 days will decrease from the current 19 percent to 11 percent, and the RCS investigation backlog will be eliminated.

The new quality assurance staff will identify performance issues and analyze trends to ensure consistent statewide high standards of proper and timely responses to reports of abuse of vulnerable adults.

This request supports Results Washington Goal 4 of Healthy and Safe Communities. Funding this request will decrease the number of vulnerable adult abuse and neglect investigations open longer than 90 days.

#### STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

Broad stakeholder support that met this proposal in Governor Inslee's 2013-15 biennial budget proposal is expected to continue from those participating in the APS Abuse Neglect Response sub-group, Disability Rights Washington, self-advocates, Long-Term Care Ombudsman, the Attorney General Office, AARP, Community Residential Services Association, Developmental Disabilities Council and community members.