

Elder Justice Initiative

	FY 2013 Final	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 President's Budget	FY 2015 +/- FY 2014
Elder Justice/APS	\$2,000,000	--	\$25,000,000	+\$25,000,000
FTE.....	0	0	4	+4

1/ Funding for this activity was provided from the Prevention and Public Health Fund in FY 2013. The FY 2015 request is for discretionary funding.

Authorizing Legislation: Title XX of the Social Security Act, Subtitle B, Section 2042, as amended by the Affordable Care Act, Subtitle H – Elder Justice Act, Sections 6701-6703; Sections 411 and 751 of the Older Americans Act, as amended

Program Description:

Combating the rising scourge of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation in America remains one of ACL’s top priorities. A 2004 national survey showed a 16 percent increase in the number of elder abuse cases from an identical study conducted in 2000.¹⁰⁰ Data is limited, but according to a 1998 national incidence study, 84 percent of all elder abuse incidents go unreported, meaning that for every reported case of abuse there are over five that go unreported.¹⁰¹

The negative effects of abuse, neglect, and exploitation on the health and independence of seniors are extensive. Research has demonstrated that older victims of even modest forms of abuse have dramatically higher (300 percent) morbidity and mortality rates than non-abused older people.¹⁰² Additional adverse health impacts include an increased likelihood of heart attacks, dementia, depression, chronic diseases and psychological distress.

The issues of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation affect millions of Americans. Enactment of the Affordable Care Act included enactment of the Elder Justice Act. ACL’s FY 2015 Elder Justice Initiative proposes \$25,000,000 to fund Elder Justice Act activities. These funds will be used to fund Adult Protective Services, research, and evaluation activities.

¹⁰⁰ Teaster, Pamela, et al. *The 2004 Survey of State Adult Protective Services: Abuse of Adults 60 Years of Age and Older*. http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/NCEARoot/Main_Site/pdf/2-14-06%20FINAL%2060+REPORT.pdf

¹⁰¹ Tatara, Toshio, et al. *The National Elder Abuse Incidence Study Final Report*. 1998. http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/Elder_Rights/Elder_Abuse/docs/ABuseReport_Full.pdf

¹⁰² Lachs, M.S., Williams, C.S., O'Brien, S., Pillemer, K.A., & Charlson, M.E. (1998). “The Mortality of Elder Mistreatment.” *JAMA*. 280: 428-432. and Baker, M.W. (2007). “Elder Mistreatment: Risk, Vulnerability, and Early Mortality.” *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association*, Vol. 12, No. 6, 313-321.

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS

Adult Protective Services

Unlike Child Protective Services, there is currently no federal infrastructure for Adult Protective Services. Adult Protective Services (APS) programs are the principal state and local agencies responsible for receiving and responding to reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults, including elders and people with disabilities. These current State and local APS programs provide a range of services designed to ensure the safety and well-being of adults who are in danger of being mistreated or neglected, are unable to take care of themselves or to protect themselves from harm, and who have no one to assist them. These services include:

- receiving and investigating reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation;
- case planning, monitoring, evaluation, and other case work and services; and
- providing, arranging for, or facilitating the provision of medical, social service, economic, legal, housing, law enforcement, or other protective, emergency, or support services.

APS programs exist in all states, and APS is a state-established, -administered, and primarily state-funded, program. There is currently no Federal infrastructure to support basic programmatic standards. State and local governments have created varied APS programs whose interventions reflect the unique parameters of their state authorizing legislation. The increasing complexity of elder and other adult abuse cases, the rising older population, difficult State and local budget conditions, and the absence or inadequacy of consistent data systems and uniform reporting requirements have presented challenges to State, local, and Tribal APS programs, particularly when it comes to developing the most promising and effective interventions possible to prevent adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation. These conditions also have prevented APS programs from evaluating their services or conducting meaningful program evaluations.

Many of these same challenges have limited efforts to develop new and innovative approaches to preventing, detecting, and responding to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The National Adult Protective Services (NAPS) program, to be funded by this initiative, will support a multifaceted approach to improving state APS systems and addressing these challenges. It would provide for the development of a national APS data system; provide competitive grants to States to test and evaluate innovative approaches to preventing adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and establish ACL as a Federal resource for APS. This funding focuses on translating promising prevention interventions from other violence prevention areas to elder abuse, and evaluating both the effectiveness of the intervention as well as the comparative effectiveness of the initiative across states in order to build more effective and efficient abuse prevention interventions.

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Research and Evaluation

The Elder Justice Act of 2009 established the Elder Justice Coordinating Council (EJCC) to coordinate activities related to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation across the Federal government. As Chair of the EJCC, the Secretary of HHS has lead responsibility for identifying and proposing solutions to the problems surrounding elder abuse. The Secretary has assigned responsibility for implementing the EJCC to the Administration for Community Living. As part of that role, ACL has led the staff-level interagency Elder Justice Working Group (EJWG) efforts to review all Federal elder justice activities, consider insights and recommendations from experts in the field, and refine proposals for the key priority areas for Federal action to address elder abuse for consideration by the EJCC.

The findings of the EJCC indicate that research in the area of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation is still in its early stages, with limited knowledge of risk and protective factors related to either victims or perpetrators, nor about effective and evidence-based prevention, intervention, and remediation practices. Many of these same challenges have limited efforts to develop new and innovative approaches to preventing, detecting, and responding to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Our understanding of the phenomena of elder abuse is decades behind our understanding of either child abuse or domestic violence. We know that elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation can have devastating consequences, including increased mortality, increases in occurrence and severity of chronic diseases, and the loss of savings and even homes. Additionally, we know that people with disabilities, including older adults, are 4 to 10 times more likely to be victims of violence, abuse or neglect.¹⁰³ Research indicates that 11.5 percent of adults with a disability have been victims of sexual assault, versus 3.9 percent of adults without disabilities.¹⁰⁴

However, we do not know the best way to effectively screen for elder and other adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation; what the best programs and practices are to address it; nor how to effectively prevent it from occurring, or reoccurring.

Moreover, there is no comprehensive system designed to serve as a coordinated and seamless response for helping adult victims of abuse, nor to preventing abuse before it happens. Through this Elder Justice Initiative proposal, ACL seeks to provide federal leadership, in coordination

¹⁰³ Petersilia JR. Crime victims with developmental disabilities: a review essay. *Criminal Justice & Behavior* 2001;28(6):655–94.

Sobsey D, Mansell S. An international perspective on patterns of sexual assault and abuse of people with disabilities. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine & Health* 1994;7(2):153–78.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006.

¹⁰⁴ *Id.*

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with the Elder Justice Coordinating Council, on this issue. A critical step in this process is building a base of evidence and evaluation in order to construct a strong base for future leadership.

Funding History:

FY 2010	\$0
FY 2011	\$0
FY 2012	\$6,000,000
FY 2013	\$2,000,000
FY 2014	\$0

Note: Funding in FY 2012 and FY 2013 was provided from the Prevention and Public Health Fund. The FY 2015 request is for discretionary funding.

Budget Request:

The FY 2015 request for the Elder Justice Initiative is \$25,000,000 in first-time discretionary funding.

It is well documented that APS programs and administrators lack reliable information and guidance on best practice and standards for conducting case investigations and for staffing and managing APS programs. In addition, although all states currently have APS programs, these programs are chronically underfunded nationwide. State APS agencies are facing unprecedented budget reductions and APS caseloads are increasing. The economic downturn has impacted each of these trends, all of which lead to a system that is less equipped to respond in an effective and timely way to reports of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Funding to support APS program work nationally is a top ACL priority. Funding under this proposal will support:

- APS National Data System Development and Technical Assistance: Funds will be used to implement a national APS data system, which is currently under development; and to provide technical assistance to states on using and interfacing with this system.
- APS Demonstration Grants: Funds will be used to award competitive grants to states to test and demonstrate how to interface with the national data collection pilot project and to develop APS program standards to help states improve the quality and consistency of APS programs

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- **APS Evaluation:** Funds will be used to design an exploratory study to understand the current state of APS systems across the country and the range of services provided and characteristics of adults addressed by each agency

Funding will also be used to advance a coordinated Federal research strategy to fill the gaps in knowledge and fund initial research on high priority areas. Such research is essential in order to develop evidence-based interventions to prevent, identify and report, and respond to elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. Grant funding would be used to increase the evidence-base on screening for elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Preliminary priority areas include:

- Build the evidence-base for screening of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Research to identify perpetrator characteristics, including why they abuse and how to develop preventive interventions.
- Characteristics of victims and risk factors for experiencing abuse.
- Research into the consequences of elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation, such as potential declines in health and increased risk for co-occurring types of elder abuse.

Output Table:

Adult Protective Services Output

Indicator	Most Recent Result	FY 2014 Projection	FY 2015 Projection	FY 2015 +/- FY 2014
Output AP.1: Design Adult Protective Service evaluation to develop and test appropriate methods of addressing elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.	Contract Awarded	Ongoing	Ongoing	N/A

Resource and Program Data:

Elder Justice Initiative/Adult Protective Services
(Dollars in thousands)

Mechanism	FY 2013 Final		FY 2014 Enacted		FY 2015 President's Budget	
	#	\$	#	\$	#	\$
Grants:						
Formula	--	--	--	--	--	--
New Discretionary	1	503	--	--	5-10	5,000
Continuations	--	--	--	--	--	--
Contracts	--	--	--	--	TBD	5,000
Interagency Agreements	1	1,455	--	--	TBD	14,250
Program Support 1/		42		--		750
Total Resources		2,000		--		25,000

1/ Program Support -- Includes funds for salaries and benefits, contract fees, grant systems, and review costs