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Governor

NEW YORK STATE
OFFICE OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES
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Gladys Carrión
Commissioner

Informational Letter

Transmittal:	12-OCFS-INF-03
To:	Commissioners of Social Services
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Child Welfare and Community Services
Date:	June 11, 2012
Subject:	Distribution of “Stop Elder and Adult Abuse” Posters
Suggested Distribution:	Directors of Services Supervisors of Adult Protective Services Staff Development Coordinators
Contact Person(s):	Alan Lawitz (518) 474-9431; Alan.Lawitz@ocfs.state.ny.us or Michael Cahill (518) 486-3430; Michael.Cahill@ocfs.state.ny.us
Attachments:	A: Pub. 5129-P - Stop Elder Abuse (<i>English</i>) B: Pub. 5130-P - Stop Adult Abuse (<i>English</i>) C: Pub. 5130-P-S - Stop Adult Abuse (<i>Spanish</i>) D: Pub. 5131-P - Elder Abuse: Make The Call (<i>English</i>) E: Pub. 5132-P - Elder Abuse Is: Physical, Emotional, Financial, Neglect (<i>English</i>) F: Pub. 5132-P-S - Elder Abuse Is: Physical, Emotional, Financial, Neglect (<i>Spanish</i>) G – Suggested Distribution of Elder Abuse/Adult Abuse Posters
Attachments Available Online:	Attachments A – F can be accessed at: http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/psa/posters.asp

I. Purpose

The purpose of this release is to announce the issuance of a series of six posters, in English and Spanish, on the issues of elder and adult abuse and the role of Protective Services for Adults (PSA) in addressing such abuse. These posters, designed by the New York State Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS), inform professionals and the public of the types of elder and adult abuse, and they provide the PSA telephone numbers to call the local departments of social services (LDSS) to report suspected cases. The posters are intended to support LDSS public education and outreach activities regarding PSA and the protection of vulnerable elders and adults living in the community who may be at risk of harm and have no one to assist them.

II. Background

Elder abuse and adult abuse are significant threats to the health and safety of frail elderly adults and other adults with impairments. The number of reports in New York State of financial exploitation, physical and emotional abuse, and neglect of vulnerable adults, both by persons they know and by strangers, continues to increase, even as these problems remain under reported. According to the recent New York State Elder Abuse Prevalence Study funded by OCFS, an estimated 24 incidents of abuse go unreported for every incident reported, with financial exploitation being the most common form of abuse. The mission of PSA, a mandated social service provided by the local departments of social services across the state, is to stop the abuse and keep vulnerable adults safe. However, the effectiveness of the service is reduced when professionals and the public are unaware of the dimensions of the problem and how to report suspected abuse. To help educate the community about what elder and adult abuse is and where to call for help, OCFS has designed a series of “Stop Elder Abuse / Adult Abuse” posters, in English and Spanish, for districts to distribute and post in prominent locations in the community.

III. Program Implications

Regulations state that local departments of social services must educate the general public, service providers, advocacy groups and other appropriate agencies about the scope of PSA and how to obtain services. The regulation further states that public education and outreach activities must: (1) be sufficient to ensure access to PSA; (2) be conducted on an on-going basis; and (3) use any informational materials provided by OCFS [18 NYCRR 457.7(f)]. The posters issued by OCFS are intended to provide support to the LDSS efforts to comply with these regulations.

Electronic copies of the posters have been placed on the OCFS website at <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/> and can be accessed with the links on page 1 of this policy or at the Adult Services section of the OCFS website under Posters. This spring, OCFS Bureau of Adult Services staff are arranging for an initial distribution of posters to

all LDSS PSA units, and are available to provide technical assistance regarding suggested distribution and display both within LDSS offices and with the LDSS partner agencies in the PSA Service Delivery Network. OCFS will also provide copies of the posters to its partner state agencies for their information and use. A suggested distribution list for the LDSS is included in Attachment G.

Additional copies of the posters may be obtained by contacting the New York State Office of Children & Family Services Forms/Publications Hotline at 518 473-0471 or by completing a "Request for Forms and Publications" form (OCFS-4627, located at <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/documents>) and mailing your request to:

OCFS Resource Distribution Center
11 4th Avenue
Rensselaer, New York 12144-2629

/s/ Laura M. Velez

Issued By:

Name: Laura

Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Division of Child Welfare and Community Services

Attachment G

Suggested Distribution of Elder Abuse/Adult Abuse Posters

By Local Departments of Social Services Protective Services for Adults Units to:

- County/city office for the aging/meals on wheels providers
- County/city mental health
- County/city providers for adults with developmental disabilities
- Non-profit elder abuse/elder services providers
- Providers of services to victims of domestic violence
- Home care providers
- Senior companion care companies
- Veterans Administration office/ non-profit providers of services to veterans
- Hospital social work/discharge offices
- Senior citizen centers
- Law enforcement
- Fire departments
- EMTs
- District attorney offices
- Multidisciplinary groups addressing adult abuse/elder abuse in the community
- Churches, synagogues, mosques, or other religious institutions
- Local banks and financial services companies
- Physicians
- Schools such as medical schools, law schools (especially those that have law clinics serving seniors or persons with disabilities), schools of social work, etc.
- Social Security Administration offices
- Local media
- Post offices, libraries, community bulletin boards at grocery/department stores, family/police/small claims courts, chambers of commerce, mayor's offices, pharmacies
- Public transport