

Elder Abuse Commission 2022-23

As Ohio's population ages, the commission's work to protect the elderly becomes all the more crucial. Here's a look at the group's progress during the recently ended biennium.



DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL



DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

My fellow Ohioans:

Kay and Richard Hoppe, a married couple in their 70s, probably felt like they were in good hands when a Knox County deputy sergeant befriended them and helped them move into a Mount Vernon nursing home.

They gave Daniel Bobo power of attorney to help them manage their affairs.

But when Richard Hoppe died in 2018, and with Kay Hoppe suffering from Alzheimer's disease, Bobo and his wife, Elisabeth, began to help themselves to the Hoppes' assets. By the time that Kay passed away in 2020, the Bobos had used the power of attorney and access to the Hoppes' credit cards to spend \$500,000 on themselves.

Fortunately, the case was investigated by the Bureau of Criminal Identification, a branch of the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and the Bobos' crimes were brought to light. The Bobos ended up pleading guilty to multiple felonies and are awaiting sentencing.

It was an appalling theft and an even more appalling betrayal of trust. And it is made worse because it was perpetrated by a law enforcement officer.

Sadly, stories like this are not uncommon. In fact, estimates are that for every case of elder abuse that is revealed, many more go undiscovered and unpunished.

Besides financial crimes, older adults are also subject to physical abuse and neglect. Sometimes the crimes are perpetrated by members of the victim's own families.

As the population of older adults increases, more Americans will suffer the failing health, declining vigor and dimming mental acuity that make them more vulnerable to criminals. That is why the work of the Elder Abuse Commission is so important. It identifies best practices, advocates for laws and policies to better protect older adults, builds networks of care, shares expertise and promotes research into elder issues.

This report details the group's work in 2022 and 2023. Barring an untimely end, each of us will become an older adult. That means we all stand to benefit from the work the commission does.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Yost".

Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General

Letter from the Chair

Dear Friends,

With the fervent support of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost, the Elder Abuse Commission works year-round to help those plagued by abuse and to educate all Ohioans about the problem.

I committed to this cause many years ago while serving as director of the Ohio Department of Aging, where I often saw the heartbreaking consequences of elder abuse.

As children, we are taught to respect our elders, to value the wisdom they've gained over time through experience. Most Ohioans honor that principle. Sadly, though, some do not.

Instead of being skilled advisers to their peers, inspiring role models for younger Ohioans and active contributors to their communities, older Ohioans who fall victim to abuse can become despondent and suffer physically, emotionally and psychologically.

Having long recognized this challenging problem, Attorney General Yost pledged his support through the Elder Abuse Commission, which strives to combat elder abuse and to lessen its impact.

It is often assumed that older women are more likely than older men to be victimized, but men are equally vulnerable. Maltreatment can happen to any older adult, regardless of gender, income level, disability status, seeming level of independence or emotional condition.

Abusers inflict a heartbreaking and widespread toll. The National Council on Aging (NCOA) estimates that as many as 5 million older Americans are abused every year and that older victims of financial exploitation face an annual loss of at least \$36.5 billion.

Who abuses older adults? Both men and women, the NCOA reports, and in 60% of the cases of abuse and neglect, the offender is a relative.

Several factors can make an older adult vulnerable to abuse. The most notable is mental impairment. Recent studies show that nearly half of older adults with dementia have experienced abuse or neglect. Other factors include social isolation, which can lead victims to assume that their situation is "normal" or that help is unavailable. An NCOA researcher noted that some older adults "may be reluctant to acknowledge that they are victims because of embarrassment, fear of being taken from their homes, family loyalty or a mistrust of authority figures."

Regardless of the root cause, the Elder Abuse Commission remains dedicated to promoting ways to respond to, lessen and prevent elder abuse. Likewise, the commission is committed to educating the public about how to spot such abuse and report it.

During 2022 and 2023, commission members produced several initiatives to further the commission's purpose and legislative basis.

As of the commission meeting of April 24, 2023, we were pleased to welcome several additional members: a representative of the interests of geriatric medicine, a designated representative of elder abuse research organizations, and one from the Ohio Judicial Conference. Additionally, the director of the Department of Medicaid became an ex officio member.

The commission likewise examined many other topics, including:

- The possibility that the shortage of direct care workers is fueling an increase in elder abuse.
- The Department of Medicaid's survey to improve delivery of services.
- The role of law enforcement in responding to and curbing elder abuse.
- The governor's task force on nursing home quality and accountability.
- Access for crime victims with disabilities to the criminal justice system.
- Crisis services' interaction with older adults who have behavioral health conditions.
- Peace officer training on dementia.
- Incorporation of trauma-informed approaches into the care of older persons, including older victims of domestic violence.

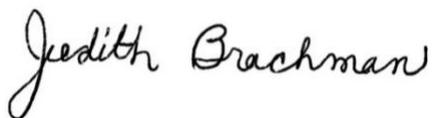
The commission worked closely with the Attorney General's Criminal Justice and Mental Illness Aging Committee, reviewing both the Ohio Crisis Continuum in the behavioral mental health system and the potential for more effective interaction between the behavioral health and aging systems.

Commission members also provided the quarterly program for the Criminal Justice and Mental Illness Aging Committee. It examined both system- and service-level responses to situations involving older adults with mental illness and co-occurring disorders. Such collaborations are aimed at diverting older Ohioans with mental illness from jail time to community oversight.

The Ohio Elder Abuse Commission remains dedicated to providing leadership for statewide efforts to prevent and respond to harm to older Ohioans. It plans to make further progress during the 2024-25 biennium through additional education, coordination of public and private resources, possible legislative action, and established standards for delivery of care.

This work will require the help of all goodhearted Ohioans, as we all must join together to ensure a secure future for the aging residents of our great state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith Brachman".

Judith Brachman
Elder Abuse Commission Chair

About Elder Abuse

Elder abuse encompasses any intentional or negligent act by a caregiver or another individual that harms or poses a serious risk to an older adult. The harm might be physical, sexual, emotional or psychological, or it might involve neglect or financial exploitation.

With Ohio's population steadily aging, it's important for all Ohioans to recognize our collective obligation to protect our elders and to address the challenge of elder abuse through informed policies and practices.

According to the Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University, 25% of Ohio's population – one in four – will be 60 or older by 2040. Thus, the need to adequately safeguard older Ohioans from abuse, neglect and exploitation has grown along with the state's aging population.

Unfortunately, statistics also show that some older Ohioans are robbed of the opportunity to live a healthy life marked by dignity and autonomy. In state fiscal year 2021, a staggering 33,396 cases of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation involving adults 60 or older were reported to the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services – a number that's believed to represent only a fraction of the true total.

According to the National Center on Elder Abuse in Washington, D.C., studies show that older individuals who suffer dementia face an even greater risk of abuse, with roughly 50% experiencing some form of mistreatment that often goes unreported.

In order to identify elder maltreatment earlier and reduce the number of incidents, Ohio needs effective collaboration among a wide range of community partners. It's essential for Ohio to treat its older residents with dignity and respect, and to provide them with meaningful opportunities to contribute to society.

AG Yost's Elder Abuse Commission

Building Systematic Solutions that Promote a Just Ohio

The Attorney General's Elder Abuse Commission (EAC) was established in 2009 to help and empower older Ohioans – a goal that is vital to building a strong and inclusive Ohio.

The EAC's mission includes:

- Raising awareness of elder abuse and improving education on how to reduce and prevent it.
- Encouraging research.
- Improving policy, funding and programming.
- Advancing elder justice and the judicial response.
- Identifying ways to implement statewide coordination efforts.

In September 2018, the 132nd General Assembly codified the EAC through House Bill 49. Ohio Revised Code Sections 5101.74 and 5101.741 (available in [Appendix A](#)) define the commission's duties and membership. (The same General Assembly amended the member list in March 2019 via Senate Bill 158.)

The commission is made up of representatives from numerous agencies in Ohio government as well as other public and private organizations dedicated to assisting older adults.

The commission remains steadfast in developing systems and programs that promote justice, prevent abuse and offer support to elderly Ohioans in need. Much like a sturdy house relies on a solid foundation and support beams, Ohio needs a durable structure that allows older residents to live free from abuse, neglect and exploitation and to participate fully in their communities.

The EAC meets at least four times a year to discuss initiatives, pending legislation, and programs that prevent and reduce elder abuse. In August 2022, the EAC resumed in-person meetings in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, reaffirming its mission through statewide advocacy, collaboration with legislators, and educational outreach events.

The EAC formulates and recommends strategies through its five committees:

- **Direct Practice**, which provides resources to front-line practitioners and identifies the services needed to reduce and eliminate elder abuse and victimization.
- **Education**, which conducts outreach to teach the public, first responders and service providers how to prevent, identify and investigate elder abuse.
- **Policy**, which identifies a variety of potential legislative and administrative policy responses to elder abuse.
- **Research**, which supports and guides elder justice researchers.
- **Communications** (added in 2023), which develops effective communications to increase awareness, promote early detection of elder abuse, and enhance access to public services throughout the state.

The EAC continues to play a crucial role as it works in tandem with other resources in Ohio to empower older adults and protect their dignity and freedoms. In fact, the commission broadens options for older residents by creating access to services, including those offered by the criminal justice system.

The EAC also has been an active member of the Ohio Attorney General’s Criminal Justice and Mental Health Task Force. EAC representatives serve on the task force’s Aging Subcommittee, with a special emphasis on the role of the courts and public-safety systems to protect Ohio’s growing older population.

As the state’s population ages, the commission’s efforts to empower older Ohioans is an increasingly vital part of achieving a just Ohio for all. Here’s a look at the committees’ progress during calendar years 2022 and 2023:

Committee Reports

Direct Practice Committee

The primary objective of the Direct Practice Committee is to promote various standard-of-care models to front-line practitioners, including:

1. Adult Protective Services workers, law enforcement, and state licensing and oversight agencies.
2. Health-care and mental-health providers, and case managers.
3. Providers of services for the aging and their employees.
4. Caregivers.

5. Legal surrogates, such as guardians and individuals who hold power of attorney.
6. Victim advocates.
7. Legal system responders, including prosecutors, elder-law and public-interest attorneys, and court personnel.
8. Ombudsmen, staff and volunteers.
9. Banks, brokers and other providers of financial services.
10. Members of religious communities.

The priorities of the Direct Practice Committee include:

- **Expanding knowledge about elder abuse.** Practitioners should know how to recognize and respond to the characteristics of elder abuse, including age, incapacity, disability, ethnicity, family structure, language, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status.
- **Identifying gaps in geriatric care.** Gap analysis helps to identify disparities in services across various networks and improve the prevention of elder abuse and its response. Networks with gaps include aging, consumer, disability, legal, financial, health, hotline, housing, mental health, social, trauma and victim services.
- **Securing training for experts in elder care.** Additional training to existing health professionals can help expand the pool of such professionals with expertise in aging and elder abuse. These professionals should also become familiar with local multidisciplinary teams that address legal, social-service or financial issues, and, as appropriate, be a part of such teams.

The Direct Practice Committee remains dedicated to promoting best practices for the prevention and early identification of — as well as the response to — elder abuse as a way of ensuring that any abuse cases yield the best possible outcome. In 2022 and 2023, the committee continued to be driven by its work in examining the various stages of capacity evaluations for older adults and disabled adults at risk of experiencing abuse or other crimes. Related to this review process, the committee:

- Thoroughly examined the scope and complexity of cognitive functioning and the point at which decision-making capacity is impaired; identified factors that impact decision-making capacity; and developed a draft of a conceptual framework to consider using for assessing capacity.
As a result of this exploration, the committee next plans to host a series of webinars focusing on lessons learned about the inherent challenges of capacity evaluations and the disparities statewide in accessing trained expert evaluators. The webinars will also highlight existing assessment screening tools and tests designed to evaluate decisional capacity, and advocate for increased uniformity in the standard of care for formal capacity evaluations of victims of elder abuse and other crimes.
The committee will finalize this project by developing and publicizing a standard of care for conducting capacity evaluations. The standard will serve as an excellent resource for educating a broader range of interdisciplinary team members.
- Monitored and advocated for House Bill 488 during the Ohio Legislative 135th General Assembly. The legislation aimed to amend Ohio guardianship laws, including efforts to expand the list of professionals qualified to conduct evaluations and complete expert evaluation statements regarding the need for establishing guardianship. Unfortunately, the bill was unsuccessful and will need to be reintroduced.
- Organized a workshop for the 2023 Elder Abuse Awareness Day Conference, held on June 28, 2023. The conference — themed “Understanding Domestic Violence in Later Life and Supporting Victims with Trauma-Informed Responses” — featured the Ohio Domestic Violence Network and an Elder Abuse Commission member. The event received positive feedback from attendees.

Education Committee

The Education Committee works to expand awareness and knowledge of elder abuse, focusing on both the public and professionals, including first responders and service providers. This commitment stems from the recognition that education plays a pivotal role in early detection, prevention and increased reporting of elder abuse.

The committee's outreach events heighten public awareness and provide guidance on how to prevent, identify and investigate elder abuse. The events cover myriad topics, including research, policies, neglect and exploitation, and interventions that have proved effective.

Four noteworthy events presented by the committee during 2022 and 2023:

- The **2022 Protecting Older Ohioans Forum** – themed “Responding to Financial Exploitation, Scams and Fraud in Facility Settings” – took place on Feb. 23, 2022, drawing more than 300 attendees. The 2½ -hour virtual forum aimed at older Ohioans, their families and caregivers educated participants on:
 - Avoiding financial exploitation, an all-too-common form of elder abuse.
 - Guarding against financial wrongdoing in nursing homes, assisted-living facilities and similar settings. Experts discussed steps to take to protect yourself, warning signs of financial exploitation and more.
 - Reporting financial exploitation to local and state authorities, notably how to go about it and why it's important.
- The 2023 **2023 Empowering Older Ohioans Forum**, took place on Nov. 16, 2023, at the Evans Center in Grove City. The forum focused on the use of civil legal remedies to protect and prevent elder abuse. The 2-hour forum aimed at older Ohioans, their families and caregivers educated participants on:
 - Increased public awareness about the various types of scams and the reasons why older adults are often targeted.
 - Increased knowledge is key to prevention and early detection.
 - Increased awareness of civil legal remedies available to prevent and intervene when necessary.
- The **2022 Elder Abuse Awareness Day webinar**, held on June 22, 2022, was themed “A Just and Strong Ohio: Reframing the Elder Abuse Discussion.” The half-day webinar for professionals emphasized the need to reframe the elder abuse discussion in our communities. It showcased strategies for putting elder abuse on the public agenda, fostering collective responsibility, and garnering support for systemic solutions to prevent and respond to elder abuse. The featured speakers were Julie Schoen and Alycia Cisneros of the National Center on Elder Abuse. The webinar drew more than 200 attendees.
- The **2023 Elder Abuse Awareness Day Conference** took place on June 28, 2023, at Ohio State University's Fawcett Center with the theme “From Research to Practice: Integrating Trauma-Informed Responses to Elder Abuse.” The turnout was strong, with nearly 200 advocates and professionals joining together to explore effective strategies for addressing the growing problem of elder abuse. The

featured speaker was Shelly L. Jackson, Ph.D., of the Elder Justice Initiative at the U.S. Department of Justice. The conference, which centered on the role of trauma in the lives of older adults, emphasized the importance of employing trauma-informed approaches in addressing elder abuse. It likewise emphasized the responsibility that we all share for ensuring justice for older Ohioans.

Policy Committee

In collaboration with other EAC committees, the Policy Committee serves as a crucial resource for identifying and exploring potential approaches that government agencies throughout Ohio can adopt to address elder abuse. The Policy Committee's work involves tracking and analyzing policies related to elder abuse and subsequently promoting and supporting effective laws, regulations and guidance for government at all levels. In essence, the committee assists officials in implementing and enforcing robust policies and initiatives to combat elder abuse.

During 2022 and 2023, the Policy Committee actively participated in vetting relevant legislation and providing additional resources as policy is developed. More specifically, it advocated for several key bills, including:

- **Esther's Law (Senate Bill 58):** This legislation – signed by the governor on Dec. 22, 2021, and effective as of March 21, 2022 – permits residents of long-term-care facilities to conduct electronic monitoring of their rooms.
- **Workforce challenges:** During the February 2023 commission meeting, the committee provided an overview of the Direct Care Workforce, focusing on the need for expansion. Additionally, it advocated for a provision in House Bill 33 (the state budget) that increased provider rates, particularly for programs such as PASSPORT personal care, with the goal of supporting wages of \$17-18 per hour. Administrative implementation is scheduled for January 2024.
- **Penalties for elder abuse:** The committee collaborated with Rep. Daniel Troy on HB 419, getting it added to Senate Bill 288 in the 134th General Assembly. This change, which took effect on April 4, 2023, modifies the law regarding the duty of mandatory reporters of adult abuse, neglect or exploitation. It adds a "knowingly" element to the duty, making it a violation if a mandatory reporter has reasonable cause to believe that an adult is being abused, neglected or exploited and knowingly fails to report it. Such a violation is a fourth-degree misdemeanor.
- **State funding increase for Adult Protective Services:** The committee played a crucial role in advocating for increased funding for the Adult Protective Services line item in FY 2022 and FY 2023. For FY 2023, it successfully secured an additional \$4 million, increasing the line item from \$5,720,000 to \$9,720,000 per year. The committee also advocated for state budget funding for supportive services to enable older adults to remain in the community, including Healthy Aging Grants and Senior Community Services GRF.

In addition to advocating for policy, the committee hosted the workshop "Trauma-Informed Care: Opportunities for Policy to Drive Practice" as part of the commission's 2023 Elder Abuse Awareness Day Conference, held June 28, 2023. This workshop, moderated by the Health Policy Institute of Ohio, explored opportunities for organizations to integrate trauma-informed care (TIC) principles and strategies into public and private policies at the state and local levels. The discussion highlighted various organizations' efforts to implement or explore TIC elements in their policies, ultimately advancing the cause of prevention of/effective response to elder abuse.

Research Committee

The Research Committee recognizes that the more Ohio knows about elder maltreatment, the better equipped the state will be to prevent and/or respond to such abuse. As a result, the committee promotes research conducted by experts throughout Ohio. Given that elder abuse has far-reaching implications across many disciplines – medicine, social work, criminal justice, public health and others – the committee seeks out experts experienced in developing research in these fields and related ones.

The Research Committee backs research by, say, issuing letters of support for special projects or sharing relevant communications, such as research alerts. The committee does not seek funding to conduct empirical research of its own.

Building upon the previous work of the Research Committee and the guidance provided by the [U.S. Department of Justice’s “Elder Justice Roadmap,”](#) the committee is dedicated to achieving the following objectives:

- Increasing awareness among professionals, advocates and policymakers in Ohio regarding developments in elder abuse research and its relevance to their work.
- Strengthening the organizational infrastructure to make elder abuse research within the state more compelling.
- Identifying research questions that are of particular interest to Ohio policymakers and practitioners.
- Collaborating with members of the EAC and identifying areas of mutual interest between the Research Committee and other committees.

During 2022 and 2023, the Research Committee focused on the topic of trauma-informed care, after it was identified as a significant area of interest among Ohio stakeholders. The committee developed an interactive workshop on research and trauma-informed care for the Attorney General’s 2023 Elder Abuse Awareness Day event on June 28, 2023. Designed to foster collaboration across disciplines, the workshop engaged participants in discussions about the impact of research on policy and practice.

The committee’s ongoing and future projects include identifying pertinent topics of interest among stakeholders in Ohio; conducting a comprehensive review of research literature on elder maltreatment; collaborating with commission members and the agencies they represent to help address research questions, determine appropriate metrics for measuring outcomes and establish connections throughout the community; and expanding the committee’s webpage on the website of the Ohio Attorney General’s Office to provide additional resources and information to a wider audience.

Communications Committee

The Elder Abuse Commission established a Communications Committee in the fall of 2023, primarily to create and disseminate educational materials.

Accomplishments

Increasing Public Awareness

Since its inception in 2009, the EAC has been dedicated to promoting awareness, fostering local and state collaboration, and developing a comprehensive approach to the multifaceted issue of elder abuse.

The commission's efforts to increase public awareness center on organizing presentations statewide that cultivate and distribute educational resources related to scams, identity theft, health-care fraud and elder abuse, and focus on consumer-protection tips.

The commission has also provided professionals with first-responder guidelines for cases of elder abuse. The guidelines include a checklist of first steps, necessary actions, and questions to ask.

In addition, the EAC each year:

- Marks **Elder Abuse Awareness Day**, which is focused on building stronger support systems that benefit older Ohioans by preventing elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. It is disheartening to learn that one in every 10 older Ohioans experiences elder abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. Each June, the state recognizes Elder Abuse Awareness Day and the commission sponsors a public conference. The themes and attendance figures for the 2022 and 2023 conferences:
 - **2022** — “A Just and Strong Ohio: Reframing the Elder Abuse Discussion,” an online event attended by 225 people.
 - **2023** — “From Research to Practice: Integrating Trauma-Informed Responses to Elder Abuse,” an in-person event attended by nearly 200 people.
- Organizes the public **Empowering Older Ohioans Forum**, with topics chosen based on societal needs and program evaluations. The themes and attendance figures for the 2022 and 2023 forums:
 - **2022** — “Responding to Financial Exploitation, Scams, and Fraud in Facility Settings,” a webinar with 328 participants.
 - **2023** — “Responding to Elder Financial Exploitation, Scams and Fraud,” an in-person form that drew 60 participants.

The commission remains steadfast in its commitment to building an Ohio that is friendly to residents of all ages and where elder abuse and neglect are eradicated.

Leading Legislative Reform

Legislation plays a crucial role in preventing and intervening in elder abuse. During 2022 and 2023, the commission supported and advocated for numerous laws to protect older adults:

134th General Assembly

- **HOUSE BILL 58 | Short title: Esther's Law**
Signed by governor: Dec. 22, 2021
Effective date: March 23, 2022
 - Addresses resident rights to dignity and privacy in situations involving roommates.
 - Places requirements on facilities to make reasonable accommodations and prohibits retaliation against residents who want to install electronic monitoring devices.

- **SENATE BILL 288 | Short title:** Criminal Justice Omnibus
Signed by the governor: Jan. 3, 2023
Effective date: April 4, 2023
 - Expands commission membership to include the Ohio Department of Medicaid, Ohio Judicial Conference, interests of geriatric medicine.
 - Stipulates penalties for failing to report elder abuse is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree.

- **HOUSE BILL 23 | Short title:** Requires EMS/Peace Officers to Undergo Dementia-Related Training
Signed by the Governor: Jan. 2, 2023
Effective date: April 3, 2023
 - Mandates training for peace officers and Emergency Medical Service personnel in identifying and interacting with individuals with dementia.
 - Requires the Attorney General and the State Board of Emergency Medical, Fire, and Transportation Services to establish rules governing dementia training, with consultation from the Department of Aging and the Department of Job & Family Services.

135th General Assembly

- **House Bill 33 | Short title:** Establishing Operating Appropriation for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025
Signed by the governor: July 4, 2023
 1. Equal Access to home Care: Eliminate waiting lists, ensure parity across programs, and build capacity to meet growing need for home care services for older adults and people with disabilities in Ohio.
 2. Support for Older Adults in the community: Enact policies and support programs that enable all Ohioans to continue to be active members of our communities and have options as we age.
 - Adult Day Services
 - Senior Community Services/Healthy Aging Grants
 - Assisted Living Waiver rate increases
 - Affordable Housing/Home Modifications
 - Adult Protective Services
 - Program for All Inclusive Care of the Elderly (PACE)
 3. Healthy Aging grants: \$40 million in one-time state American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in 2024 to counties through county commissioners.
 4. Flexible state funds to draw down Older Americans Act and OAA ARPA (*previous budget appropriated \$9,798,995 in SFY 2022 and \$9,737,042 in SFY 2023 including a \$75,000/year earmark to Neighborhood Alliance for Senior Nutrition Program*)
 2024-2025:
 - \$10,250,000 in 2024 (~\$500,000 increase) and \$10,750,000 in 2025 (~\$1 million increase)
 - Earmark to Senior Transportation Pilot Program in Cuyahoga County – House \$300,000 (2024) \$150,000 (2025)
 - Restored spending authority language (2024 and 2025)

5. Requires Medicaid Director to seek approval by July 1, 2024, from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for the MyCare program (or its successor) to go statewide. Also requires plans to use an Area Agency on Aging for waiver-service coordination for persons who are 60+ unless otherwise requested by the individual; allows for full delegation of care coordination to an Area Agency on Aging.
6. Adult Protective Services: Department of Job and Family Services
 - o Additional \$4 million per year (from \$5,720,000 to \$9,720,000 per year)

Funding for Adult Protective Services

The EAC has a long-standing commitment to advocating for the funding necessary to enhance the support systems required for Ohioans as they age. Adult Protective Services (APS) stands out among these crucial support mechanisms.

The APS system operates under the supervision of the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, an agency member of the commission. Although the commission does not directly oversee the agency's funding-allocation process, it has actively advocated for increased APS funding to build a dependable safety net for older Ohioans who need it.

Ohio's older-adult population has been steadily increasing and will continue to do so. According to the Scripps Gerontology Center, a fourth of Ohio's population will be 60 or older by 2040; in addition, between 2020 and 2040, Ohio is expected to see a 51% increase in the number of residents ages 85 or older.

Yet the level of APS funding allocated to help support and protect older Ohioans has not kept pace with growth in Ohio's aging population. Ohio has made great strides in APS funding during the past five years, enabling local communities to establish and strengthen connections and enhancing their capacity to respond effectively to elder abuse and neglect. But the state must continue to support the social structures that effectively prevent, identify and respond to elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

For the current fiscal year, each of Ohio's 88 counties is receiving a base allocation of \$80,000, with the remaining funds distributed by a formula to ensure that every county can employ the equivalent of a full-time staff member(s) and offer services that address the unique needs of its communities.

Next Steps for the Commission

The Elder Abuse Commission employs a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to effectively addressing the needs of older adults who have experienced or are at risk of experiencing abuse. The commission recognizes that a strong and just Ohio requires community social structures — Adult Protective Services, the criminal justice system, mental-health providers and others — to work together to integrate vital support systems to help older adults maintain connections as they age. These support systems are crucial for effectively preventing and addressing elder abuse and neglect.

The EAC has helped to strengthen Ohio's elder justice system through recent changes to Ohio law, as mentioned in this report. These efforts, in turn, have helped to increase public awareness of elder abuse, enhance training for mandatory reporters, fortified state and local systems, fostered connections among interrelated supports, and allocated additional resources to enable local systems to do more.

That said, the commission's work is not complete. The EAC will continue to strive to strengthen critical social connections, remove barriers and otherwise pursue its mission. It likewise will persist in carrying out advocacy, driving policy and outreach efforts, pushing for an increase in Ohio's investment in Adult Protective Services.

Appendix A

5101.74 Elder abuse commission

(A) There is hereby created the elder abuse commission. The commission shall consist of the following members:

(1) The following members, appointed by the attorney general:

(a) One representative of the AARP;

(b) One representative of the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association;

(c) One representative of the County Commissioners' Association of Ohio;

(d) One representative of the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging;

(e) One representative of the Board of Nursing;

(f) One representative of the Ohio Coalition for Adult Protective Services;

(g) One person who represents the interests of elder abuse victims;

(h) One person who represents the interests of elderly persons;

(i) One representative of the Ohio Domestic Violence Network;

(j) One representative of the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association;

(k) One representative of the Ohio Victim Witness Association;

(l) One representative of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police;

(m) One representative of the Ohio Association of Probate Judges;

(n) One representative of the Ohio Job and Family Services Directors' Association;

(o) One representative of the Ohio Bankers League;

(p) One representative of the Ohio Credit Union League;

(q) Two representatives of national organizations that focus on elder abuse or sexual violence;

(r) One representative of the State Medical Board;

(s) One representative of the Community Bankers Association of Ohio;

- (t) One representative of an organization representing the interests of senior centers;
 - (u) One representative of an organization representing the policy interests of seniors;
 - (v) One representative of a research-based academia representing elder abuse research.
- (2) The following ex officio members:
- (a) The attorney general or the attorney general's designee;
 - (b) The chief justice of the Supreme Court of Ohio or the chief justice's designee;
 - (c) The governor or the governor's designee;
 - (d) The director of aging or the director's designee;
 - (e) The director of Job and Family Services or the director's designee;
 - (f) The director of health or the director's designee;
 - (g) The director of Mental Health and Addiction Services or the director's designee;
 - (h) The director of developmental disabilities or the director's designee;
 - (i) The superintendent of insurance or the superintendent's designee;
 - (j) The director of public safety or the director's designee;
 - (k) The state long-term care ombudsman or the ombudsman's designee;
 - (l) One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives;
 - (m) One member of the Senate, appointed by the president of the Senate;
 - (n) One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives;
 - (o) One member of the Senate, appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;
 - (p) The director of commerce, or the director's designee.
- (B) Members who are appointed shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments.
- (C) All members of the commission shall serve as voting members. The attorney general shall select from among the appointed members a chairperson. The commission shall meet at the call of the chairperson, but not less than four times per year. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson and shall be called by

the chairperson at the request of the attorney general. The commission may establish its own quorum requirements and procedures regarding the conduct of meetings and other affairs.

(D) Members shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for mileage and other actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.

(E) Sections [101.82](#) to [101.87](#) of the Revised Code do not apply to the Elder Abuse Commission.

5101.741 Duties of commission

(A) The elder abuse commission shall formulate and recommend strategies on all of the following:

- (1) Increasing awareness of and improving education on elder abuse;
- (2) Increasing research on elder abuse;
- (3) Improving policy, funding, and programming related to elder abuse, including estimated funding necessary to implement specific recommendations;
- (4) Improving the judicial response to elder abuse victims;
- (5) Identifying ways to coordinate statewide efforts to address elder abuse.

(B) The commission shall prepare and issue a biennial report on a plan of action that may be used by local communities to aid in the development of efforts to combat elder abuse. The report shall include the commission's findings and recommendations made under divisions (A) of this section.

(C) The attorney general may adopt rules as necessary for the commission to carry out its duties. The rules shall be adopted in accordance with section [111.15](#) of the Revised Code.



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ELDER ABUSE COMMISSION 2022-23 BIENNIAL REPORT

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