

How to Detect Financial Abuse in a Nursing Home

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Financial abuse is often under-reported. This may be because those who suffer through this type of abuse are not always aware that they are being taken advantage of or cannot express their disapproval in a meaningful way.

In fact, one source reports that there are over *500,000 elderly people* who are victims of financial scams every year.

How to Detect Financial Abuse in a Nursing Home



Financial abuse of the elderly, including those in nursing homes, costs victims between \$2.6 and \$3 billion annually.

[Learn more](#) about the facts surrounding nursing home abuse.

These staggering numbers may be in response to increased technology, an aging population, and various social changes between age groups.

You may not realize it, but financial abuse is a form of personal injury, and a **personal injury attorney in Port St. Lucie** can help you or your loved ones fight back against nursing home abuse.

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Types of Nursing Home Abuse or Elder Abuse

Usually, when you hear “**abuse**” you may automatically assume physical, sexual, or even verbal abuse. Unfortunately, “abuse” can involve a lot more...

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is any use of physical force that causes bodily injury, physical pain, or any type of physical impairment. For those in nursing homes, this type of abuse could include the use of unauthorized or inappropriate sedative drugs, physical restraints, or force-feeding.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse is the non-consensual sexual contact of any kind with an elderly individual. This includes those who are unable to provide consent as well. This is especially important for those who may have dementia or Alzheimer’s disease.

- **Emotional or Psychological Abuse**

This type of abuse generally involves the infliction of pain, distress, or mental anguish. It can be through either verbal or nonverbal acts. It could include actions like threats, intimidation, harassment, or embarrassment.

- **Abandonment**

If an elderly individual is left alone and uncared for by another person who has assumed the role of caretaker, then they are likely suffering from a form of abuse called abandonment.

- **Neglect**

Like abandonment, if the caretaker refuses to fulfill their obligations as the responsible person for an elderly individual, then they may be engaging in neglect. This can also include the failure to pay for certain services for the elderly individual, such as water, heat, or rent. [Click here](#) for more information about elder abuse and neglect.

Financial Abuse

Financial abuse occurs when someone else uses an elderly person's funds, assets, or other property for their own personal gain or for the gain of someone other than the elderly individual. You can read more about types of elder abuse [here](#).

What is Financial Abuse?

Financial abuse is difficult to recognize because it does not have physical signs or symptoms like other forms of elder abuse. You have to keep a close eye on the elderly person's funds to determine if financial abuse is occurring.

Types of financial abuse can include:

- Using credit cards, checks, or cash as if they were your own
- Stealing cash, income checks (pension, Social Security, etc.), or personal items
- Stealing the elderly person's identity by using their name, birthday, and Social Security number (particularly to obtain credit)
- Forging the elderly person's signature
- Tricking the elderly person into "investment opportunities" or to donate to a fake charity

In nursing homes, elderly people often rely heavily on their caretakers. These caretakers may even pay the individual's regular expenses for them.

Even if a caretaker does not do this directly, it is fairly easy to find financial information and take advantage of an elderly person who may not have the capacity to watch their own finances any longer.

Signs of Financial Abuse

Although financial abuse can occur in nursing homes from the actions of strangers, it is far more likely that an elderly person will be taken advantage of by someone that they trusted—like family or friends.

Relatives may not even realize what they are doing is considered a form of financial abuse. You can protect your loved one by looking for signs of financial abuse.

Ask the following questions:

- Do these signatures look like my loved one's signatures?

- Would my loved one have normally spent money on this item?
- Why are these bills still unpaid?
- Where are these funds transfers going?
- Why is my loved one taking out large amounts of cash from their account?
- Have any names been added to my loved one's account?

Keep a close eye on usual changes such as unexplained disappearance of valuables or funds. This may require that you gain access to your loved one's accounts to monitor money as it goes in and out.

If a will or other financial document changes, then this could also be a sign of fraud or financial abuse.

Legal Implications of Financial Abuse—Why You Should Contact a Port St. Lucie Personal Injury Attorney

If you discover that a loved one is the victim of financial abuse, do not just sit there—do something! Financial abuse is a crime. It could involve charges, such as:

- Forgery
- Embezzlement
- False instruments
- Financial exploitation
- Identity theft
- Larceny
- Fraud

It can also lead to a personal injury case. Often, where there is one type of fraud or abuse, another can be found.

Contact an **experienced personal injury lawyer in Port St. Lucie** for more information about your legal options. In some cases, you may be able to recover what was wrongfully taken from your loved one.

Do not let someone else take advantage of someone you love. Take the first step toward fighting back and [visit](#) a personal injury attorney in Port St. Lucie.

**Injured? Call Now for a Free Case Evaluation
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