



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LEE COUNTY OBSERVES ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

LEE COUNTY, NC — June 14, 2023 — All month long, and especially tomorrow, June 15, Lee County Government and the Lee County Department of Social Services are observing World Elder Abuse Awareness Day to raise awareness of this systemic social challenge.

As Americans, we believe in justice for all. This includes ensuring justice and protection for older members of our society who have been or are at risk of being abused or neglected. Older people are vital, contributing members of society and their maltreatment diminishes all of us. Just as we have confronted and addressed the social issues of child abuse and domestic violence, so too can we find solutions to address issues like elder abuse, which also threatens the well-being of our community.

Our policies and practices make it hard for older people to stay involved with and connected to our communities as they age. As a result, older people are more likely to experience social isolation, which increases the likelihood of abuse and neglect. We can design stronger societal support systems to keep our older people connected and protect them from abuse, whether financial, emotional, physical, or sexual. When we address a root cause, like social isolation, we also make it less likely that people will become neglected. Older adults who are socially connected and protected from harm are less likely to be hospitalized, less likely to go into nursing homes, and less likely to die.

In 2022 alone, the Lee County Department of Social Services took 116 APS reports. As a reminder, the law requires the report of instances of elder abuse or neglect to our County Department of Social Services offices.

Residents may file reports both during and after business hours by:

- Telephone contact (919-718-4690) or by a visiting the Department (530 Carthage Street, Sanford, NC) between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- Night, holiday, and weekend reporting for CPS or APS may be made through contact with the Sanford Police Department (919-775-8286) and the Lee County Sheriff's Office (919-718-4560). Please note these agencies are always open and willing to contact our on-call worker, who will then reach out to you regarding your report.

It is all of our responsibilities to protect our vulnerable populations, including our elders who are experiencing abuse or neglect. We can and must create healthier and safer living environments for older adults, including their homes, nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Find more information about how to make a difference by visiting the National Center on Elder Abuse <https://ncea.acl.gov> or by calling the Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116 to explore local community services and supports. For media inquiries, please contact Hailey Hall, Clerk to the Board/Communications Specialist at (919) 718-4605, ext. 5521 or hhall@leecountync.gov.

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