

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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Agency launches central intake line to report elder abuse and neglect

BISMARCK, N.D. – On July 1, the North Dakota Department of Human Services is launching a centralized phone number for people to call to report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of vulnerable adults. Department staff will answer calls during the weekday to the Aging and Disability Resource Link - Vulnerable Adult Protective Services intake line at 1-855-462-5465.

Staff will review concerns and provide information to the regional human service centers and partnering agencies if a home visit is needed to assess a situation. People can leave a message if they are calling after hours.

“Our goal is to make it easy to report concerns. Because vulnerable adult protective services are provided by the department and contracted partner agencies, having one phone number benefits the professionals who are required by law to report concerns,” said Michelle Gayette, the department’s vulnerable adult protective services administrator.

Gayette stressed that if a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger of serious injury or death, people should still call 911. After emergency responders are contacted, people should still call the central intake number to report the concern.

“It is important for people to report both urgent and non-urgent concerns so that professionals can follow up and make sure that health, welfare and safety issues are addressed,” Gayette said.

People can also make a report online at <https://fw2.harmonyis.net/NDLiveIntake/>. A reporter can remain anonymous.

According to Gayette, the department received about 1,500 reports of possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation of vulnerable adults in 2014.

The Vulnerable Adult Protective Services Program serves vulnerable adults age 18 and older or minors who are married and who have mental or functional impairments. More information about the service and mandated reporting is online at www.nd.gov/dhs/services/adultsaging/reporting.html.

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