

Update on Elder Abuse Training and Reporting



**City Council B Session
March 19, 2025**

Presented by: Jessica Dovalina, Assistant Director, Department of Human Services

Presentation Overview



- Elder Abuse, Neglect and Financial Exploitation in Bexar County
- Background
- Update on Training Development and Implementation
- Elder Abuse Taskforce Update
- Next Steps

Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation in Bexar County



- In Bexar County, over the last ten years, the number of allegations reported to Adult Protective Services for older adults has increased by 41% from 4,064 to 5,719
- In Fiscal Year 2024, Bexar County had the highest rate of Adult Protective Services Investigations per 1,000 older adults compared to other large Texas counties

FY 2024 Completed Adult Protective Services Investigations for Older Adults (65+) by County

County	Population 65+	FY 2024 Total (Valid and Invalid)	Rate per 1,000 Older Adults
Harris	627,812	9,751	15.5
Dallas	348,180	4,749	13.6
Tarrant	316,824	4,632	14.6
Bexar	305,677	5,719	18.7
Travis	162,515	1,938	11.9

Background



- Council Consideration Request on elder abuse and neglect reporting filed by Councilmember Cabello Havrda in December 2023
- Item presented to:
 - Governance Committee on April 17, 2024
 - Public Safety Committee on August 20, 2024
- Public Safety Committee directed Human Services (DHS) to collaborate with Adult Protective Services to develop and implement curriculum to provide training to 10 forward facing departments



Existing Department Practices



Human Services

- DHS collaborates with Adult Protective Services to provide annual training to Senior Services staff
- Raise awareness of older adult financial fraud, exploitation and abuse to older adults and caregivers
- Senior Services Division provides education to stakeholders and older adults on mandatory reporting requirements
- DHS closely coordinates with APS to provide reports and referrals

San Antonio Police Department

- Officers trained as cadets on factors that constitute elder abuse
- Patrol Officers closely coordinate with Adult Protective Services to provide reports and referrals
- Investigation Division investigates and reports criminal elder abuse cases ranging from misdemeanors to felonies
- Financial Crimes Unit investigates elder fraud and conducts training sessions

Launch of Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Financial Exploitation Training



- In February 2025, DHS and Adult Protective Services launched online training for City employees
 - Initial launch targeted 10 City Departments
- Training provides guidance on recognizing and reporting:
 - Physical Abuse
 - Verbal/Emotional Abuse
 - Sexual Abuse
 - Neglect (Self and Caregiver) and
 - Financial Exploitation
- The current completion rate for identified City Departments is 25% with a goal for training to be completed by May 2, 2025



Initial Department Training Cohort

Human Services	Police	Fire
Neighborhood and Housing Services	Parks and Recreation	Development Services (code enforcement)
City Attorney's Office	311	Animal Care Services

San Antonio Metropolitan Health District

Elder Abuse and Exploitation Taskforce Update



- Co-founded by Texas Senator Jose Menendez and Bexar County Judge Veronica Vasquez
- Comprised of City of San Antonio, Bexar County, Adult Protective Services, and community stakeholders
- Current Primary Taskforce Initiatives:
 - Coordination on legislative efforts to establish Senior Justice Assistance Centers in large Texas counties
 - Filing of proposed legislation to make it mandatory for Texas Judges to receive elder abuse and exploitation training
 - Grant application submitted by Bexar County for Victims of Crime Act funding, on behalf of the Taskforce, with anticipated awards issued in September 2025



Next Steps



- Initial training cohort will be completed on May 2, 2025
- Following completion, Human Services will promote the training to all City Employees
- Human Services recommends refresher training be completed annually
- Human Services and San Antonio Police Department will continue to provide education, training, resources and support



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