



# ELDER JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL

Elder abuse is a widespread social, public health, and economic issue. It is estimated that approximately 10 percent<sup>1</sup> of older adults experience elder abuse, including physical abuse, psychological or verbal abuse, sexual abuse, financial exploitation, and neglect. Like other forms of interpersonal violence, elder abuse usually occurs behind closed doors, and remains “invisible.” In addition, data from state Adult Protective Services (APS) agencies show an increasing trend in reports of elder abuse,<sup>2</sup> despite estimates that as few as 1 in 14 cases of elder abuse,<sup>3</sup> and 1 in 44 cases of financial exploitation,<sup>4</sup> come to the attention of authorities.<sup>5</sup>

## ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The [Elder Justice Act of 2009](#) (EJA) was enacted to address these problems, and reflects the commitment of the federal government to the prevention, detection, treatment, intervention and prosecution of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. The EJA also established the Elder Justice Coordinating Council (EJCC), designed to coordinate activities across the federal government related to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The EJCC is a permanent group that meets at least twice a year with the goal of better coordinating the federal response to elder abuse.

The EJA designates the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as having responsibility for implementing the EJCC, and also names the U.S. Attorney General as a permanent member of the EJCC. Because of the more than 40 years of work to address elder maltreatment issues, the HHS Secretary delegated chairmanship of the EJCC to the Assistant Secretary for Aging, within HHS’ Administration for Community Living. In addition to the HHS Secretary and the Attorney General, the statute provides for inclusion as EJCC members the heads of each federal department, agency, or governmental entity identified as administering programs related to elder abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation. There are currently [16 EJCC members](#).<sup>6</sup> The EJCC receives continuous input and support from the Elder Justice Interagency Working Group, a group of federal employees in Cabinet-level departments and federal agencies with expertise in the field of elder abuse, neglect and financial exploitation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Acierno R, Hernandez MA, Amstadter AB, Resnick HS, Steve K, Muzzy W et al. Prevalence and Correlates of Emotional, Physical, Sexual, and Financial Abuse and Potential Neglect in the United States: The National Elder Mistreatment Study. *American Journal of Public Health* 2010; 100(2):292-297.

<sup>2</sup> Teaster PB, Dugar T, Mendiondo M, Abner EL, Cecil KA, Otto JM. The 2004 Survey of Adult Protective Services: Abuse of Adults 60 Years of Age and Older. National Center on Elder Abuse: Washington, DC. Retrieved August 8, 2011 from: [http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Main\\_Site/pdf/2-14-06%20FINAL%2060+REPORT.pdf](http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Main_Site/pdf/2-14-06%20FINAL%2060+REPORT.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> National Research Council. *Elder Mistreatment: Abuse, neglect and exploitation in an Aging America*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Lachs, Mark, et al. (2011) *Under the Radar: New York State Elder Abuse Prevalence Study Final Report*. Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc.: Weill Cornell Medical Center of Cornell University and New York City Department for the Aging.

<sup>5</sup> National Research Council. *Elder Mistreatment: Abuse, neglect and exploitation in an Aging America*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> The Administration for Community Living. Elder Justice Coordinating Council (EJCC). Retrieved August 26, 2020 from: [https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2020-08/EJCC\\_Member\\_List.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2020-08/EJCC_Member_List.pdf)



# ELDER JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL

## ACTIVITIES

The EJCC has engaged in a number of activities to carry out its mission of improving coordination among federal agencies working on elder justice issues, and released four products. Through the relationships forged by the EJCC, the member agencies have made significant progress through a number of accomplishments to address elder maltreatment, among them:

- The creation and adoption of the [Eight Recommendations for Increased Federal Involvement in Addressing Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation](#)<sup>7</sup>, intended to guide federal agencies in focusing efforts on a common set of priorities to address elder maltreatment;
- The development of the [National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System \(NAMRS\)](#), the first of its kind effort to systematically collect from APS programs across the country standardized data about the incidence of elder maltreatment as reported to APS;<sup>8</sup>
- With input from the Department of Health & Human Services Administration for Community Living, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Department of the Treasury, and Financial Crimes Enforcement Network issued a [joint memorandum on Financial Institution and Law Enforcement Efforts to Combat Elder Financial Exploitation](#);<sup>9</sup> and

Additional information on the EJCC's activities and accomplishments can be found under the [Elder Justice Coordinating Council section](#)<sup>10</sup> on the ACL website, including:

- Elder Justice Coordinating Council Meetings
- [Eight Recommendations from the Elder Justice Coordinating Council for Increased Federal Involvement in Addressing Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation](#) (PDF)
- [Elder Justice Coordinating Council 2014 Report to Congress](#) (PDF)
- [Elder Justice Coordinating Council 2016 Report to Congress](#) (PDF)
- [Elder Justice Coordinating Council 2018 Report to Congress](#) (PDF)

---

<sup>7</sup> Administration for Community Living. "Eight Recommendations from the Elder Justice Coordinating Council for Increased Federal Involvement in Addressing Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation." [https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2016-09/Eight Recommendations for Increased Federal Involvement.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2016-09/Eight%20Recommendations%20for%20Increased%20Federal%20Involvement.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> NAMRS was created in partnership by the HHS Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and ACL. The continued operation of NAMRS is carried out by ACL. See: "National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS)" at <https://acl.gov/programs/elder-justice/national-adult-maltreatment-reporting-system-namrs>

<sup>9</sup> Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. "Memorandum on financial institution and law enforcement efforts to combat elder financial exploitation." <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/policy-compliance/guidance/supervisory-guidance/memorandum-financial-institution-and-law-enforcement-efforts-combat-elder-financial-exploitation/>

<sup>10</sup> Administration for Community Living. "Elder Justice Coordinating Council (EJCC)." <https://acl.gov/programs/elder-justice/elder-justice-coordinating-council-ejcc>