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COMMISSIONER

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ELDER RIGHTS PROGRAM

LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Georgia has two programs that provide legal assistance to older Georgians.

(1) The **Georgia Senior Legal Hotline** provides free legal advice, brief service, and referrals for Georgians age 60 and over. Seniors from any part of Georgia can call the Hotline toll-free and talk to an attorney about almost any civil legal problem. The Hotline seeks to help vulnerable seniors who have difficulty obtaining legal assistance because of social need (physical and mental disabilities, language barriers, or isolation) and/or economic need.

Hotline attorneys can answer questions about powers of attorney, probate, consumer problems, Medicaid, homeownership, landlord-tenant, public benefits, grandparent adoptions, and other matters. If your legal problem cannot be settled by "self-help" advice or brief service, then the Hotline attorney will try to refer you to an appropriate source for more in-depth assistance, for example, your local Georgia Elderly Legal Assistance Programs (see next program description) .

The Hotline accepts calls Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. You can call the Hotline toll-free at 1-888-257-9519.

When you first call the Hotline, your call will go directly to the Hotline's confidential voicemail. Please be prepared to leave your name, your telephone number, and a good time of day that you are usually home. An attorney will call you back within two business days or sooner.

The Hotline is a program of the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, in partnership with the Division of Aging Services.

(2) The **Georgia Elderly Legal Assistance Program** provides legal representation, information and education in civil legal matters throughout the state of Georgia. Services are provided by legal providers throughout the state who contract with the state's twelve Area Agencies on Aging. Services are provided in such areas as accessing health care, housing, consumer issues, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, long-term care, the defense of guardianship, elder abuse and exploitation, and with advance directives among others. Eligibility for services from the Elderly Legal Assistance Program are not limited by a person's income or assets, although the program is federally mandated to serve those most in need socially and or economically.

To reach the ELAP representatives serving your area, contact your Area Agency on Aging, the Georgia Senior Legal Hotline or Division of Aging Services at 1-866-55-Aging (1-866-552-4464).

GEORGIA CARES

GeorgiaCares helps people with Medicare understand their choices and enroll in a Medicare plan that meets their needs. GeorgiaCares can help you understand Medicare and get the most out of your healthcare benefits. It is a volunteer-based program that provides free, unbiased and factual information and assistance to Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers through individual one-on-one counseling, community education and outreach. GeorgiaCares

is the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) and SMP (formerly Senior Medicare Patrol). For more information, call 1-866-552-4464 or visit www.mygeorgiacares.org

LONG TERM-CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM (LTCO)

Seeks to improve the quality of life for residents in nursing homes and personal care homes (also called assisted living homes). The ombudsman investigates and works to solve problems affecting residents, including complaints regarding resident rights, quality of care, and discharges from the facility. The ombudsman visits residents regularly and can provide residents and their families with information regarding long-term care.

To find out about the community ombudsman program serving your area, please call your local Area Agency on Aging or call the statewide toll-free number for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at 1-866-552-4464. You may also visit our website at www.georgiaombudsman.org

AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CONNECTION (ADRC)

Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) is a system of partnering organizations that are dedicated to providing accurate information about publicly and privately financed long-term supports and services related to aging, developmental and physical disabilities. ADRCs offer a consumer-oriented approach to learning about the availability of services in the home and community.

Contacting the ADRC alleviates the need for multiple calls and/or visits to receive services (one-stop shop). Georgia's ADRC currently serves 118 counties across the state including Central Savannah River Area, Coastal Georgia, Atlanta Regional Commission, Northeast Georgia, Northwest Georgia, River Valley, Southern Georgia, Southwest Georgia, and Three Rivers. For more information or to receive assistance visit the website at www.georgiaadrc.com or call 1-866-55-Aging (1-866-552-4464).

ELDER ABUSE AND CONSUMER FRAUD PREVENTION

Seeks to enhance the identification and prevention of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. The program targets older adults, caregivers, agencies serving older abused persons, the general public, law enforcement, the criminal justice system, health care providers, social workers, first responders, and other professionals.

The Division of Aging Services contracts with the Area Agencies on Aging to provide elder abuse prevention activities in Georgia. Program activities include:

- Community education for the general population;
- Information and referral services for older victims of elder abuse;
- Training for professionals including but not limited to long term care facility staff, fire and rescue, financial institution employees and law enforcement; and
- Raising awareness of abuse, neglect, and exploitation through information distribution at community events, informational fairs, public service announcements, and press releases.

To find your local Elder Abuse Prevention Provider, contact the local Area Agency on Aging. For assistance in finding your local AAA call 1-866-55-Aging (1-866-552-4464).

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Adult Protective Services (APS) handles reports of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of disabled adults (18-64) or elder persons (65+) who reside in the community. Abuse includes physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, financial exploitation, neglect, and self neglect.

To report abuse, neglect, and exploitation contact APS Central Intake:

Toll-Free: 1-866-552-4464

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