

Adult Maltreatment

Report | 2019



NAMRS
NATIONAL ADULT MALTREATMENT REPORTING SYSTEM

About This Report

Federal Disclaimer

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Electronic Access

This report is available on the Administration for Community Living website at <https://namrs.acl.gov/>

For Questions and More Information

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Acknowledgements

In communities around the country, adult protective services (APS) staff, administrators, and advocates work diligently to ensure the safety and well-being of adults who are maltreated by others or who are unable to care for themselves. Understanding the nature and extent of adult maltreatment—and the ways APS programs respond to it—is critical to enhancing the effectiveness of APS programs. To that end, we are pleased to release the *Adult Maltreatment Report 2019*.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (ACL), in partnership with the Adult Protective Services Technical Assistance Resource Center (APS TARC), is committed to advancing the APS field through data analysis, evaluation, and technical assistance—all to support improved services and better outcomes in APS programs. The National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS), which was implemented in 2016, is a key part of this effort.

This is the fourth edition of the report and all U.S. states and territories participated by submitting information about their APS programs. As incidents of adult maltreatment continue to increase, it is important that we continue to strengthen the collective understanding of adult maltreatment as a means for driving system improvements.

This report would not be possible without the time, effort, and dedication of state and local APS field staff who document their cases, program staff who map agency documentation to NAMRS, information technology staff who generate and upload reports to NAMRS, and other agency personnel who lead and support them. We gratefully acknowledge the efforts of all involved to make this report possible. We will continue to do everything we can to promote the safety and well-being of maltreated adults across our nation.

ACL gratefully acknowledges the voluntary submission of data to the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS) by the states, the District of Columbia (D.C.), and U.S. Territories. This report would not be possible without the support of the adult protective services (APS) staff, supervisors, and program administrators in collecting and reporting data to NAMRS.

Sincerely,

The ACL & the APS TARC Team

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Introduction

All U.S. states, territories, and the District of Columbia (referred to as “states” or “programs” hereafter) provide adult protective services (APS) to respond to reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation (collectively referred to as “maltreatment” in this report) of adults. The Elder Justice Act (EJA) defines APS as services provided to adults such as:

- Receiving reports of adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation;
- Investigating the reports [of adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation];
- Case planning, monitoring, evaluation, and other case work and services; and
- Providing, arranging for, or facilitating the provision of medical, social service, economic, legal, housing, law enforcement, or other protective, emergency, or support services.

Elder Justice Act of 2009, S. 795, 111th Cong.

Most APS programs operate within the basic framework outlined in the EJA definition. Within this framework, however, there is much diversity across APS programs in terms of population served, policy and practice, and available resources.

The National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS) is the first comprehensive, national reporting system for state APS programs. Each year since federal fiscal year (FFY) 2016, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) has collected annual data from states on adult maltreatment through NAMRS. The Adult Protective Services Technical Assistance Resource Center (APS TARC), funded by ACL, provides

training and technical assistance to states to assist with NAMRS submissions.

NAMRS is one of many activities undertaken by ACL to build public and professional understanding about adult maltreatment and strengthen the social supports to prevent it. As a result of ACL system enhancement grants and APS TARC technical assistance, every state now participates in NAMRS. This report provides an overview of adult maltreatment as reported to APS programs, drawing on FFY 2019 NAMRS data unless otherwise noted.

There was a three percent increase in the number of reports accepted for investigation between FFY 2018 and FFY 2019, when comparing data from states that submitted the number of reports screened in. Exhibit A provides summary data and information on adult maltreatment as investigated by APS programs in FFY 2019.

ACL Programs and Resource Centers Supporting Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

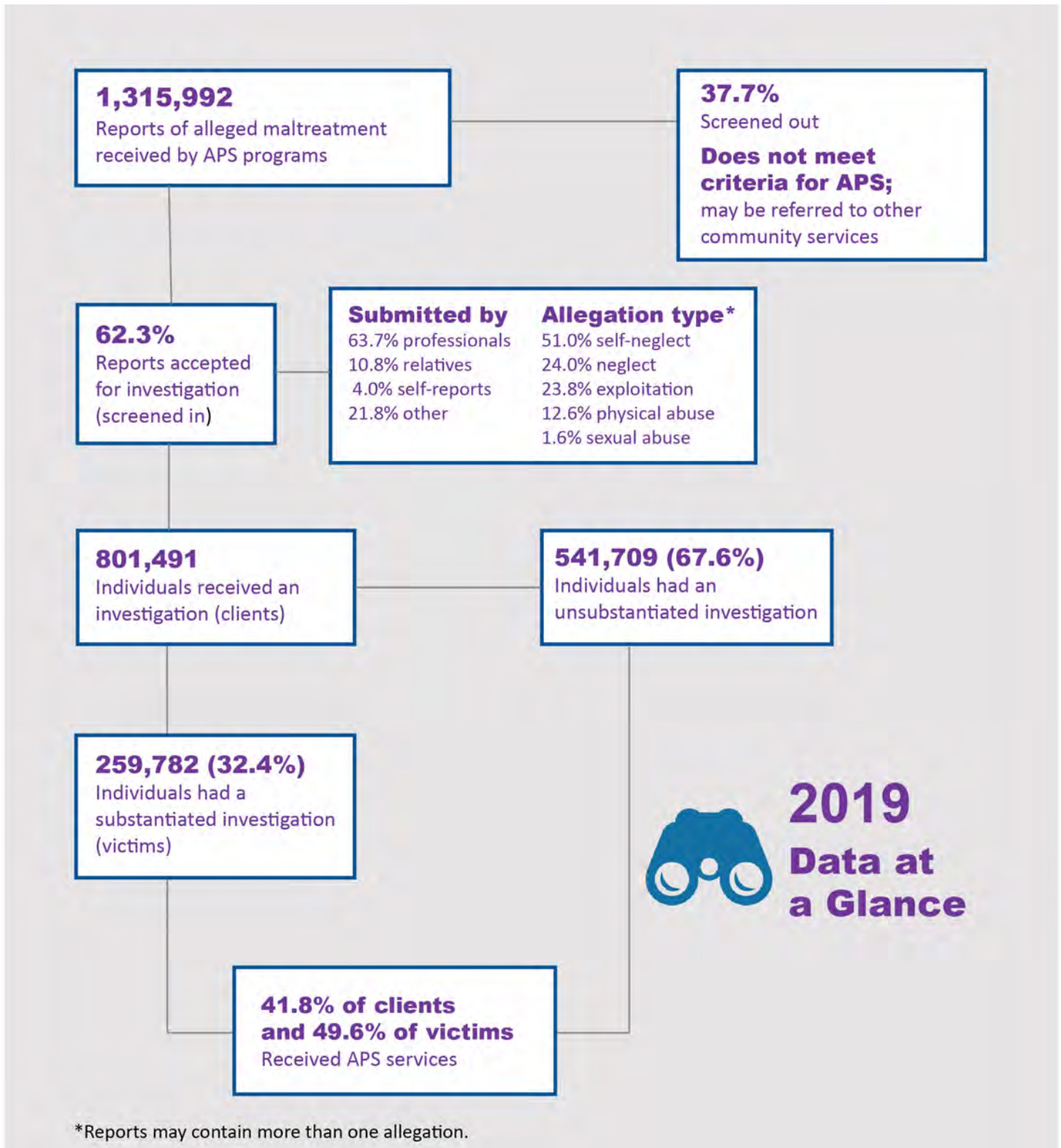
- APS Technical Assistance Resource Center (APS TARC)
- National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS)
- National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA)
- National Center on Law and Elder Rights (NCLER)
- National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC)
- National Resource Center on Women and Retirement Planning (NRCWRP)
- Pension Help America (PHA)

There was a **slight increase in the number of APS investigations** between FFY 2018 and FFY 2019.



Data Summary

Exhibit A: 2019 NAMRS Data



Chapter 1: Overview of NAMRS and APS

Overview of NAMRS

The goal of NAMRS is to collect consistent and accurate national data on investigations and services from APS programs for the purpose of better understanding the phenomena of adult maltreatment in the U.S. To achieve this, NAMRS collects quantitative and qualitative data on APS practices and policies, and the results of investigations into the maltreatment of older adults and adults with disabilities.

NAMRS is comprised of three components: Agency Component, Key Indicator Component, and Case Component. Every state submits the Agency Component, which provides an overview of the operational structure of the state’s APS program. The Agency Component includes information such as state program contacts, summary intake data, and information on the laws and policies governing the APS program. In addition, states that are able also submit

summary data through the Key Indicators Component (20 data elements), or detailed case data through the Case Component (54 data elements), as described in Exhibit 1.1. Over two-thirds of states submit Case Component data, providing as many of the data elements as they are able, though no program submits all 54 elements.

For states able to provide client-level data, the Case Component module allows for an upload of client data on investigations and victims, clients, perpetrators, and client-perpetrator relationships. If a state is unable to provide client-level data, the Key Indicators Component data module allows for submission of aggregated data on many of the same case characteristics as the Case Component data module. WRMA staff serve as liaisons and review, validate, and approve data submissions.

Exhibit 1.1: Overview of the NAMRS Components

	Key Indicator Component	Case Component
Description	Summary statistics on all cases in fiscal year on 20 data elements	Case-level information on all cases in fiscal year on 54 data elements
Information Categories	Summary information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations • Clients/Victims • Perpetrators • Maltreatment type • Client-Perpetrator relationship 	Detailed information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations • Clients/Victims • Perpetrators • Maltreatment type • Client-Perpetrator relationship
Submission Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match program’s data definitions and values to NAMRS • Create data reports • Enter data on NAMRS website • Validation and approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match program’s data definitions and values to NAMRS • Extract data into XML file <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Upload data to NAMRS website – Validation and approval

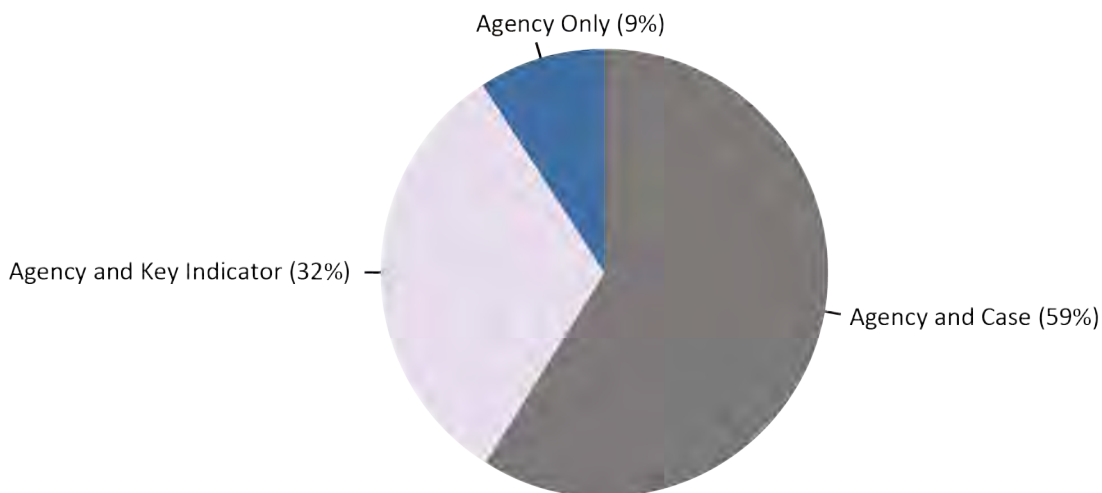
Chapter 1: Overview of NAMRS and APS

NAMRS is a voluntary and still relatively new system. Data in this report provide a national snapshot of key aspects of adult maltreatment as reported to APS programs for FFY 2019 (October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019). Each chapter of this report discusses key topics, provides significant data highlights and analyses, and includes notes for understanding and interpreting the data. It is important to note that the counts and percentages reflect duplicated clients if they were involved in multiple investigations. In addition to the notes on each graph that explain crucial aspects and limitations of the data, the following list of term definitions will help you understand the information presented in this report. For further information on NAMRS, including data specifications, visit <https://namrs.acl.gov>.

100% of states submitted
NAMRS data in FFY 2019
(N = 56)

- A **client** is an individual who has received an investigation regarding a report of alleged maltreatment.
- A **victim** is an individual who has received an investigation regarding a report of alleged maltreatment and one or more the allegations is substantiated.
- A **perpetrator** is the person who is responsible for substantiated maltreatment allegations.
- An **investigation** is undertaken by APS to determine if allegations occurred and assess client needs with a case closure date during the reporting period.
- **Maltreatment** is a type of abuse, neglect, or exploitation that is alleged to have occurred.
- An **allegation** is a reported occurrence and type of maltreatment associated with each client that is investigated. There may be multiple allegations in an investigation.
- A **case** is comprised of all activities and individuals related to the investigation of and response to an allegation of maltreatment.

Exhibit: 1.2 NAMRS State Participation by Component Type



Note: This chart shows the percentage of states that submitted each NAMRS component in FFY 2019.

Chapter 1: Overview of NAMRS and APS

Overview of APS

APS is a social services program established and administered by state and local governments to serve adults who are alleged to have been maltreated. APS agencies investigate allegations of maltreatment, provide protective services, and coordinate with community and government partners to maximize the safety and independence of victims.

In 2010, Congress passed the Elder Justice Act (EJA), the first comprehensive federal legislation to address the maltreatment of older adults. The EJA authorizes a variety of programs and initiatives to better coordinate federal responses to elder abuse, promote elder justice research and innovation, support APS systems, and provide additional protection for residents of long-term care facilities.

Investigators and supervisors are key APS staff. States report the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff who perform hotline and investigator duties and report the number of supervisors. Most APS programs have staff dedicated only to APS, while some programs share staff responsibilities with other programs or processes. For example, a state may use staff who investigate both APS and child protective services cases. In some programs, supervisors may also conduct investigations.

 **8,070**
APS Full-time
Equivalent (FTEs)

In hotline or investigator roles
(N=54 states)

 **1,645**
APS Full-time
Equivalent (FTEs)

Responsible for supervision
(N=52 states)

As a state-authorized program, each has its own laws and regulations to govern its operations. While most states follow a practice model similar to the one displayed in Exhibit 1.3, state-specific laws and regulations impact areas of practice, such as timeframes for a response, populations served, authority to investigate (jurisdiction), and types of maltreatment investigated, among others.

The Work of APS Programs



APS programs are charged with receiving and responding to reports of adult maltreatment.



APS programs work closely with clients and a wide variety of allied professionals to maximize client safety and independence.



Chapter 1: Overview of NAMRS and APS

Exhibit 1.3 APS Practice Model

	Process	Expected Results
Intake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APS program receives a report of adult maltreatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An intake is recorded and screened in, screened out, or referred to another agency • Reporter is informed about investigation or alternatives to meet the client’s needs
Investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate investigation, prioritize risk, contact client • Assess emergency needs, client’s physical and financial health, environment, and support system • Take emergency protective action (if needed) • Collect information and evidence to inform service needs and next steps • Consult with supervisor and appropriate experts and team members • Determine finding and communicate results of the investigation • Identify service needs and make recommendations as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client’s rights have been safeguarded • Victim is safe and no longer being abused, neglected, or exploited • Risk from perpetrator has been addressed • Referrals have been made to other agencies and entities, e.g., regulatory agencies, law enforcement, etc.
Post-investigation Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement service plan with client agreement • Engage community partners through referral for services or purchase of services • Monitor status of client and impact of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client or victim is safe with needs being met • Victim has reduced long-term risk for abuse, neglect, or exploitation
Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document all investigation and case management activities • Review and approve for closure • Conduct quality assurance process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of investigations and provision of services is maintained or improved

Chapter 1: Overview of NAMRS and APS

How APS Becomes Involved

The first step in an APS case is for someone to report allegations of maltreatment. These reports usually include information about:

- Alleged victim;
- Alleged perpetrator;
- Where the maltreatment occurred;
- Identification of others who might be aware of the situational details, such as family, friends and service providers; and
- Type(s) of alleged maltreatment.

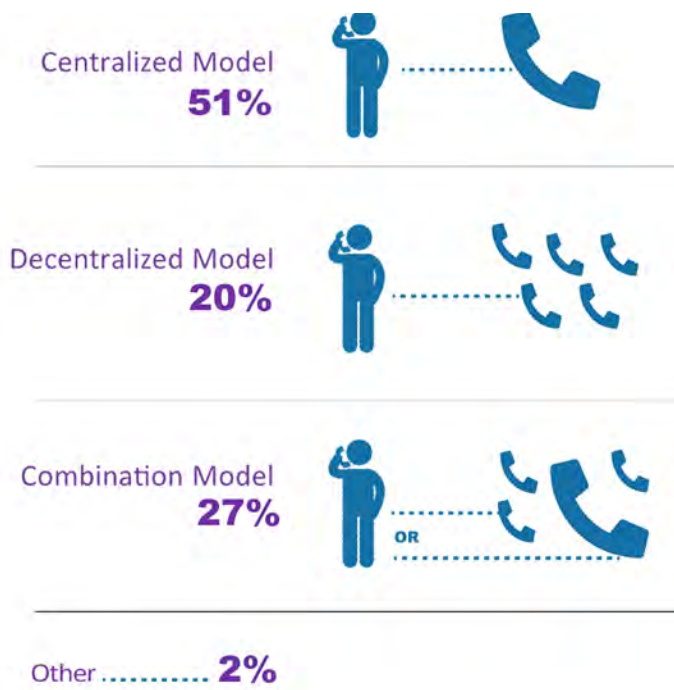
Although APS programs receive reports of maltreatment in various ways, including in-person and online, the majority of reports come in by phone to a hotline number at a call center. Some hotlines



are dedicated solely to APS and are staffed by APS professionals, while others might also handle reports for child protective or aging services. Depending on the state organization and structure, APS programs use statewide (centralized), local (decentralized), or combination approaches to staffing hotlines. Most states conduct intake at the state level, which is consistent with the fact that most APS programs are state administered. Three-quarters of states use a centralized or combined hotline model, while 20% of states receive intakes at the local level only.

APS programs use assessment tools for various casework purposes. Some tools are developed specifically for APS and some are general social work tools. States may mandate use of tools statewide or leave the use to county or worker discretion. For FFY 2019, 78% of the 54 states that submitted this data use a common assessment tool statewide.

Exhibit 1.4: APS Intake Models



Note: Based on information from 55 states. "Other" is reported as intakes taken by local law enforcement.

78%

States that use a common assessment tool statewide

Chapter 1: Overview of NAMRS and APS

Exhibit 1.6: NAMRS Maltreatment Type Definitions

Maltreatment Types	Definitions	Percentage of States Investigating the Maltreatment Type
Neglect	The failure of a caregiver or fiduciary to provide the goods or services necessary to maintain the health or safety of a person. Includes acts of omission and of commission (including willful deprivation, etc.).	98.2%
Physical Abuse	The use of force or violence resulting in bodily injury, physical pain, or impairment. Excludes sexual abuse.	98.2%
Self-Neglect	A person's inability, due to physical or mental impairment or diminished capacity, to perform essential self-care tasks including: obtaining essential food, clothing, shelter, and medical care; obtaining goods and services necessary to maintain physical health, mental health, or general safety; hoarding; or managing one's own financial affairs.	94.5%
Sexual Abuse	Non-consensual sexual contact of any kind, including sexual contact with any person incapable of giving consent.	92.7%
Financial Exploitation	The illegal or improper use of an individual's funds, property, or assets for another person's profit or advantage.	83.6%
Emotional Abuse	The infliction of anguish, pain, or distress through verbal or non-verbal acts; this includes but is not limited to verbal assaults, insults, threats, intimidation, humiliation, and harassment.	81.8%
Exploitation (non-specific)	The illegal or improper use of an individual or of an individual's funds, property, or assets for another's profit or advantage.	54.5%
Abandonment	The desertion of a person by an individual who has assumed responsibility for providing care for that person, or by an individual with physical custody of another person.	41.8%
Other Exploitation	The illegal or improper use of an individual for another person's profit or advantage, including exploitation of person, servitude, etc.	40.0%
Other	A type of maltreatment not included in the categorizations provided.	36.4%
Suspicious Death	An unexpected fatality or one in which circumstances or cause are medically or legally unexplained.	18.2%

Note: Based on information from 55 states.

Chapter 1: Overview of NAMRS and APS

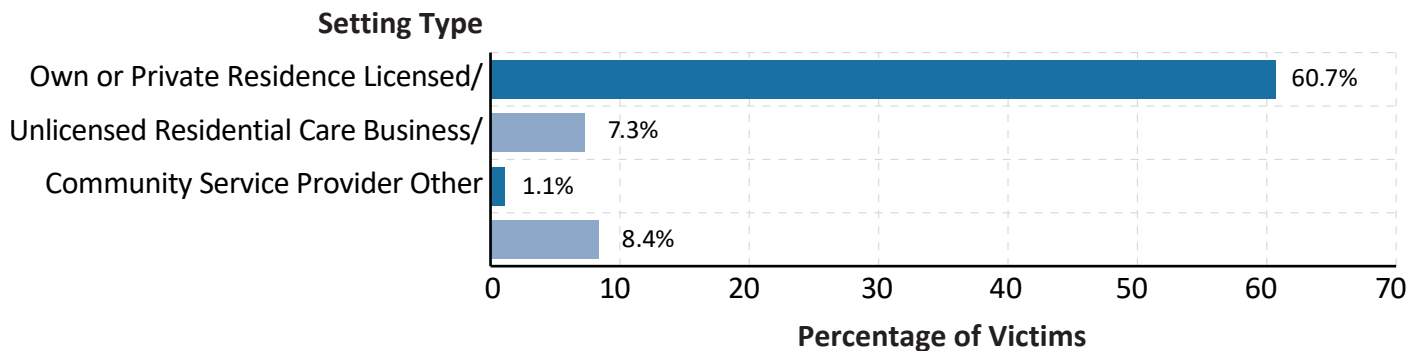
The client living settings where APS programs investigate allegations of maltreatment differ from state to state. APS programs in every state investigate allegations involving persons living in the community in their own home or another private residence. As illustrated in Exhibit 1.7, APS predominantly investigates reports where clients reside in community settings.

APS does not have the authority in every state to investigate allegations of adult maltreatment in residential care facilities (e.g. nursing facilities and assisted living facilities). APS investigates allegations in at least one type of residential care facility in 38 states. Of those, some states have the authority to investigate allegations involving the facility and its staff, while

others are only able to investigate allegations involving family members, excluding any incidents that are related to the facility staff or operations. In states where investigations of residential care facilities are not under the jurisdiction of APS, investigations of adult maltreatment are conducted by a regulatory or licensing agency.

The authority for APS to investigate incidents in residential facilities varies by state.

Exhibit 1.7: Victims by Setting of Reported Maltreatment Type



Note: Based on victim data submitted by 18 states for 44,844 victims. Unknown was listed as the setting for 22.5% of the victims.

Chapter 2: Reports and Investigations

Referrals to APS

The first step in an APS case is to receive reports of allegations of maltreatment through a screening or intake process. As shown in Exhibit 2.1, APS programs received more than 1.3 million reports and accepted 62.3% (819,863) for investigation in FFY 2019.

Of more than 1.3 million reports received, APS programs accepted 820,000 for investigation.

Once the program receives a report of maltreatment, it determines whether to accept it, or screen it “in”, for investigation. In making this decision, intake staff consider whether the alleged victim appears to meet the criteria for the eligible population served by the APS program and other program criteria, such as jurisdiction to investigate. Many APS programs only investigate allegations in which a non-professional, or person in a trusted or ongoing relationship, is the alleged perpetrator. This means that APS would not investigate certain types of phone scams or financial exploitation that occurs through a fraudulent business transaction, which are typically investigated by other government entities.

If the report does not meet the population, setting, and jurisdiction eligibility criteria, APS may refer the case to a more appropriate agency (e.g., a regulatory/licensing program, law enforcement, other social service program) or information may be provided to the reporter to assist the alleged victim.

Anyone may make a report to APS. Many state APS statutes identify individuals who are mandated, or required, to report allegations of maltreatment. Fifteen

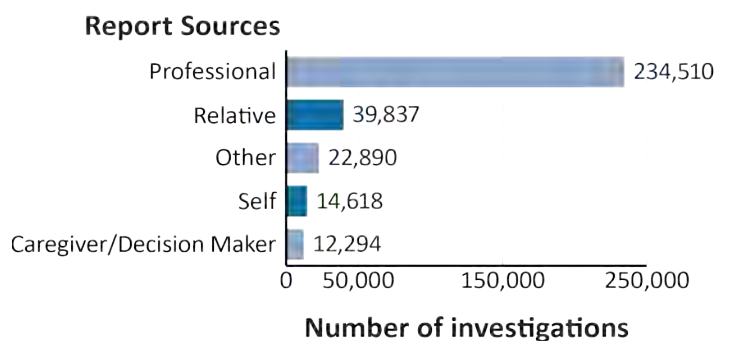
Exhibit 2.1: Total Maltreatment Type Reports



Note: Based on data from 47 states that provided the number of reports screened in and the number of reports screened out.

states have universal reporting laws, meaning everyone is a mandated reporter regardless of profession or relationship with the alleged victim. Other states only mandate specific categories of professionals. Over 60% of the reports investigated in FFY 2019 were referred by professionals, and just over 10% were reported by relatives (see Exhibit 2.2).

Exhibit 2.2: Investigations by Report Source



Note: Based on data from 26 states for 368,369 investigations. The source was Unknown or Unidentified in 67,606 investigations. Investigations may have more than one report source.

Chapter 2: Reports and Investigations

Investigations by APS

Once a report is screened in, or accepted, the APS program investigates each allegation for each client in a report. If an allegation is found to be valid based on state law and policy, then the allegation is considered “substantiated.” In NAMRS, a client with one or more substantiated allegations is identified as a victim.

In FFY 2019, APS programs completed 793,592 investigations involving 801,491 clients, of which 259,782 (32.4%) were determined to be victims. The number of clients is higher than the number of completed investigations because more than one person may be the subject of a single investigation.

Investigations of APS reports involve an assessment of the client’s potential service needs as well as a finding, or disposition, on the validity of the allegations. A report does not need to be substantiated for APS to assist the client with finding resources to address unmet needs.

Exhibit 2.3: Year-to-Year Summary Data



Note: Based on states that submitted these data elements for each of the three years as follows: 51 states for Reports Accepted; 46 states for Clients; 46 states for Investigations; 45 states for Victims.

Exhibit 2.3 illustrates that, overall, there have been slight increases in the numbers of reports, investigations, victims, and clients each year over the past three years. The number of investigations is lower than the number of accepted reports because, for a variety of reasons, not every investigation can be completed. This is discussed further under Reasons for Case Closure later in this report.

A client with one or more substantiated allegations is identified as a victim.

NAMRS collects detailed data on the disposition categories used by APS programs from states submitting Case Component data. Potential findings are categorized as substantiated, unsubstantiated, inconclusive, or other. Exhibit 2.4 provides the definitions of each type of finding and the percentage of allegations with each type of finding among the Case Component states only. As with maltreatment definitions, states match, or “map”, their disposition definitions to the equivalent NAMRS categories.

32.4%

Percent of clients involved in completed investigations who are identified as victims

Chapter 2: Reports and Investigations

Exhibit 2.4: Disposition Rates Across All Maltreatment Types

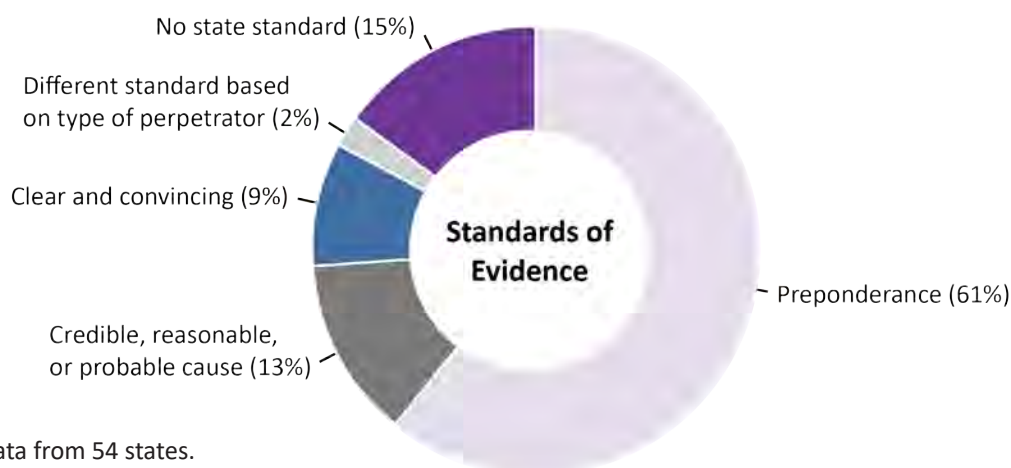
Maltreatment Disposition Type	Definition	Percentage of Allegations with Disposition Type
Unsubstantiated	The finding that the allegation of maltreatment is not supported under state law and policy.	47.0%
Substantiated	The finding that the allegation of maltreatment is supported under state law and policy.	26.3%
Other	Disposition not included in categorizations provided. Includes inappropriate allegations that were investigated.	16.4%
Inconclusive	The finding that there is insufficient information to either support or not support the allegation of maltreatment, but there is a reason to suspect maltreatment.	10.4%

Note: Based on data from 33 states for 576,801 allegations. One populous state does not use the “Substantiated” category and accounts for 64% of the reports included under the disposition of “Other.”

APS programs use the standard of evidence defined by their state statute or regulation to substantiate allegations of maltreatment. It is important to note that the standard of evidence definitions used by APS may not correspond with the use of the terms in other protective services programs or their criminal justice system. As shown in Exhibit 2.5, most state APS programs use a “preponderance of the evidence”

standard, which is usually defined to mean the greater weight of the evidence. Eight states (15%) do not have a defined standard, and one state uses a different standard depending on the type of perpetrator involved. Other standards used by states include “credible, reasonable, or probable cause” and “clear and convincing.”

Exhibit 2.5: Standards of Evidence



Note: Based on data from 54 states.

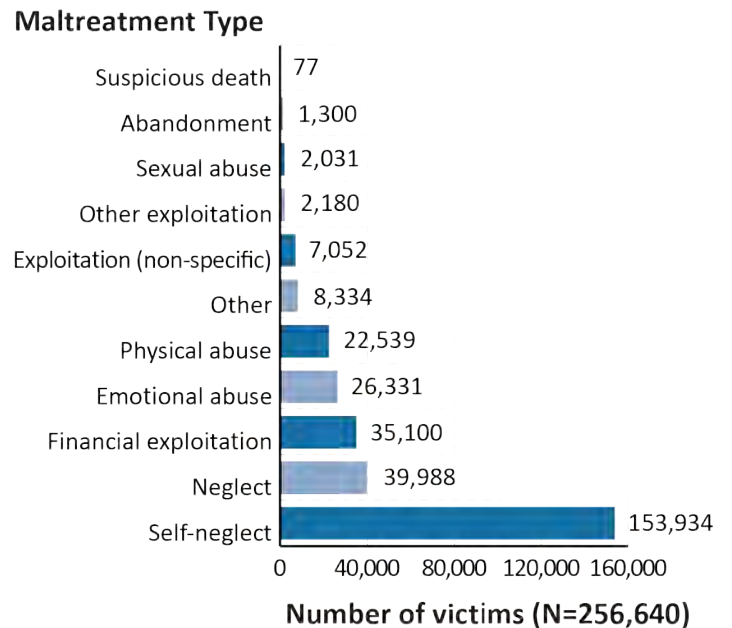
Chapter 2: Reports and Investigations

Exhibits 2.6 and 2.7 point out two of the most important features of APS programs. First, APS programs have a dual nature: they investigate various types of abuse by perpetrators but also investigate self-neglect. Neglect and self-neglect are both investigated and substantiated more frequently than other types of abuse. As shown in Exhibit 2.6, the number of self-neglect victims is more than all the other types of maltreatment combined. Since only a small number of states investigate the categories of Other Exploitation, Abandonment, and Suspicious Death, the number of victims for them is very low.

The dispositions used by APS programs vary significantly based on the maltreatment type. As shown in Exhibit 2.7, the percentage of victims with substantiated allegations is much higher for self-neglect cases than for all other types of maltreatment, except abandonment. The percentage of substantiated allegations is nearly 50% for self-neglect and ranges from 15% to 19% from most abuse types. Exploitation, (non-specific) is the exception with very few victims. Inconclusive findings are much higher for various types of abuse than it is for

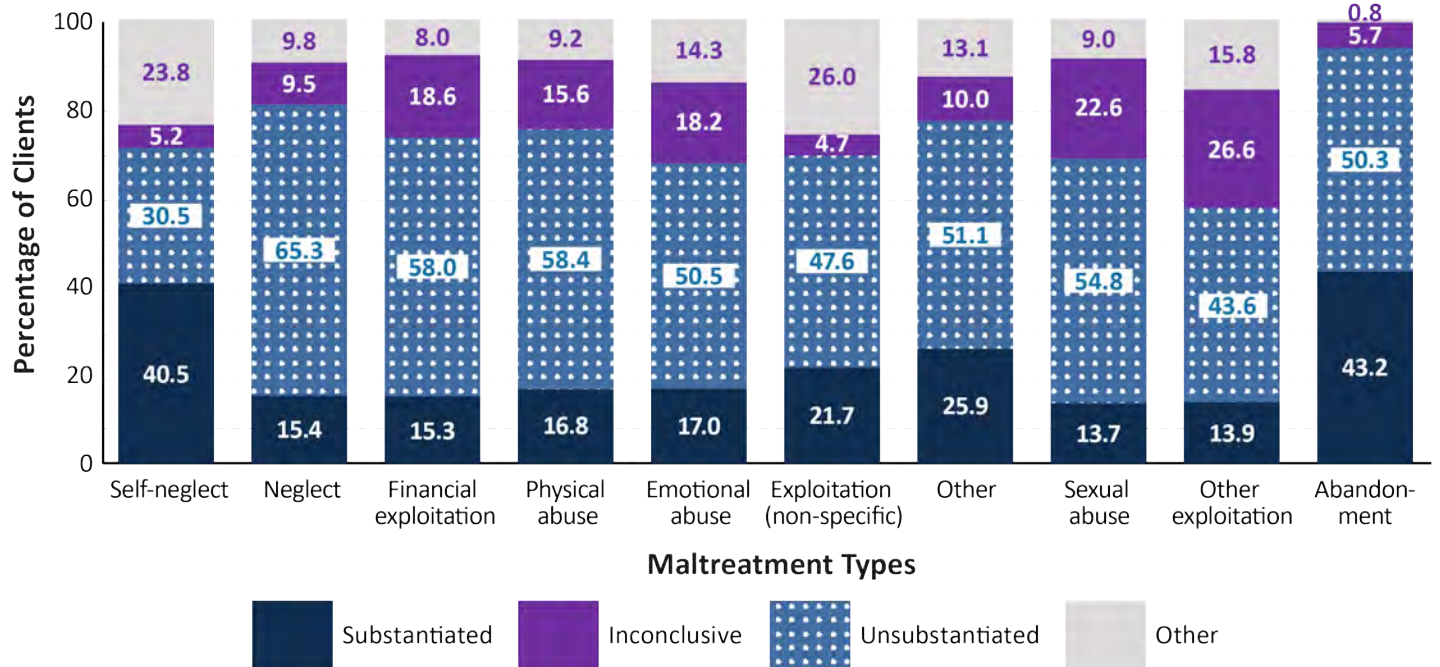
self-neglect, indicating the unique and difficult nature of many abuse investigations.

Exhibit 2.6: Victims by Maltreatment Type



Note: Based on data from 48 states. Victims may have more than one substantiated maltreatment in a single investigation.

Exhibit 2.7: Allegations by Disposition and Maltreatment Type



Note: Based on data from 33 states for 576,801 allegations.

Chapter 2: Reports and Investigations

APS Case Involvement: Initiation to Case Closure

Length of APS Involvement

An APS case consists of the investigation and, depending on the state, the provision of services to mitigate the maltreatment. Services may be provided or arranged during the investigation, or a case may remain open with the APS agency for what is considered “post-investigative services.” The APS program staff provides or arranges for services to address the client’s safety, health, or well-being needs identified during the assessment. Protective services are provided more often to victims of self-neglect than for all other types of maltreatment (see Appendix Exhibit A.1).

State statute, regulations, and/or policies establish general timeframes within which screened in reports should have an investigation initiated and conducted. Within these general timeframes, the actual length of time an APS case is open is dependent on multiple factors, including: the nature of the allegations; participation of the client, perpetrator, or others involved; the ability to collect information and evidence; whether the agency provides post-investigative services; and the availability of services in the community.

NAMRS collects data on the length of time state law and policies allow for the completion of an investigation and the actual length of time. The average length of time allowed by policy for an investigation across states is 47 days, while the actual average length of time reported is 52.6 days. The actual time is longer than policy time since many states with longer policy times report a higher number of investigations, and some investigations take longer than allowed by policy. Exhibits 2.8, 2.9, and 2.10 provide information on the time frames associated with an APS case.

Average Length of Time (Across States)

Report Initiation: 1.1 days
Investigation Duration: 52.6 days
Total Case Duration: 64.5 days

Investigation Initiation: Length of time from receipt of the report until the start of the investigation. Most APS investigations are initiated within one day, and 98% of them are initiated within seven days.

Exhibit 2.8: Time to Initiation*



Investigation Duration: Length of time from the start of the investigation to determining the findings (disposition date). Two-thirds of APS cases have an investigation duration between 1 and 60 days. The largest percentage of investigations are completed between 1 and 30 days.

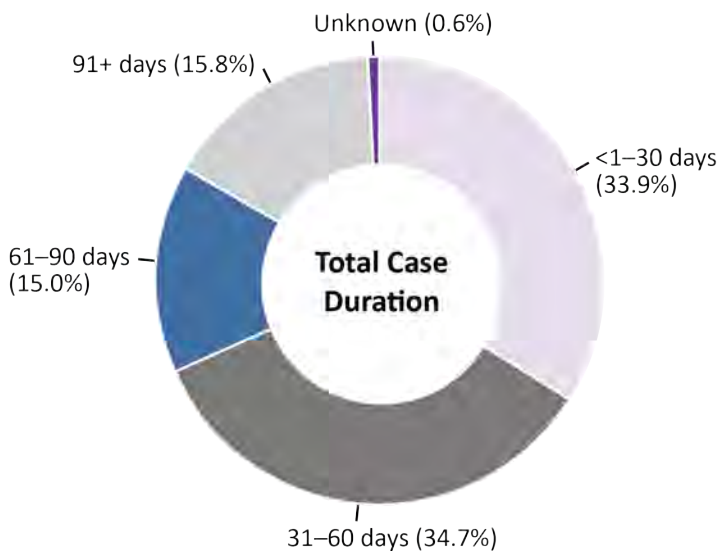
Exhibit 2.9: Investigation Duration*



Chapter 2: Reports and Investigations

Total Case Duration: Length of time from the start of the investigation until the case is closed (includes provision of services). The largest percentage of cases are open between 31 and 60 days.

Exhibit 2.10: Total Case Duration



*Note: For Time to Initiation, 32 states submitted data for 429,393 investigations. For Investigation Duration, 28 states submitted data for 352,215 investigations. For Total Case Duration, 32 states submitted data for 429,393 investigations.

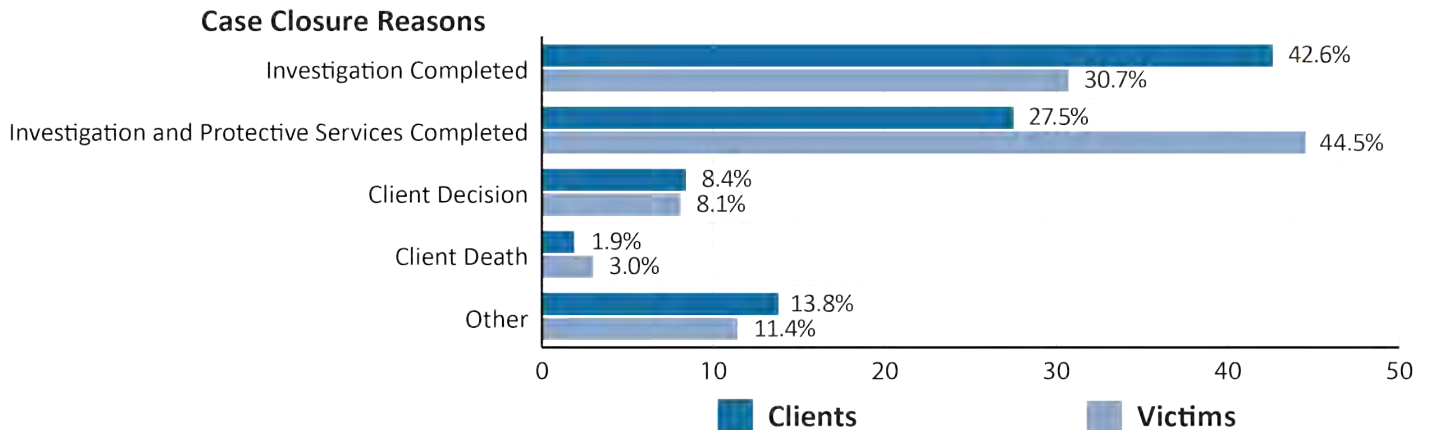
Reasons for an APS Case Closure

An APS case is closed for a variety of reasons. A foundational principle of APS casework is respect for the rights of the client including the right to self-determination. In some states, a client can refuse to allow an investigation to be completed, or they can decline services, and the APS case is then closed. Another reason is a client's death, which frequently results in the APS case being closed, especially if there is no alleged perpetrator, or the perpetrator is unknown.

Absent a court adjudication stating otherwise, APS clients and victims have the right to make their own decisions about their health and safety.

As shown in Exhibit 2.11, a higher percentage of client cases (i.e., no substantiated allegations) are closed after completion of the investigation (42.6%), and a higher percentage of victim cases (i.e., at least one substantiated allegation) are closed after an investigation and the provision of protective services (43.2%). Other reasons for case closure include client decision, death of the client, and non-specified reasons.

Exhibit 2.11: Clients and Victims by Case Closure



Note: Based on data submitted by 43 states for 719,172 clients, with 5.8% of the data reported as Unknown; Victim data are based on 26 states for 120,400 victims with 2.4% of the data reported as Unknown.

Chapter 3: Clients and Victims

Age of APS Clients and Victims

APS programs define their eligible populations by age and disability. As shown in Exhibit 1.4, all APS programs serve older adults (age 60+ and 65+) and almost all programs serve younger adults as well. There are 15 programs across the country where being an older adult is the sole criterion for APS program eligibility.

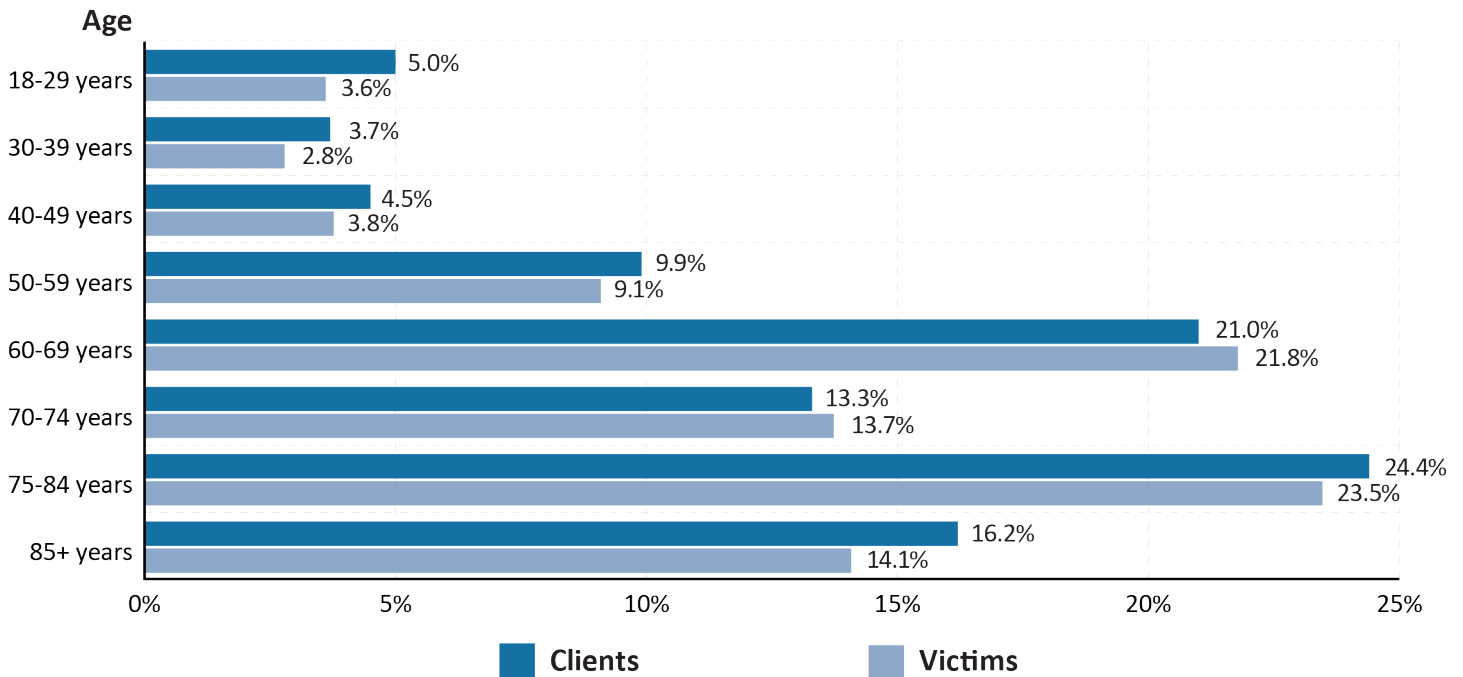
APS programs serve more older adults than younger adults. One reason is that each of the APS programs serving younger adults include disability or vulnerability in their eligible population definition which reduces the size of the young adult population eligible for APS. Another reason is that known risk factors for adult maltreatment, such as social isolation and declining health or cognitive status, are present more in older adult populations.

The age distribution in NAMRS data for APS clients and victims shows that over 70% are age 60 or older. The



data highlighted in Exhibit 3.1 also indicate that close to nine percent (8.7%) of clients and just over six percent (6.4%) of victims are under age 40. Compared to the overall victim population, victims of abandonment and sexual abuse are younger, while victims of exploitation are older (see Appendix Exhibit A.2).

Exhibit 3.1 APS Clients and Victims by Age



Note: Based on 32 states submitting data for 430,887 clients, and 43 states submitting data for 219,565 victims, age was Unknown for 2.1% of clients and 7.7% of victims.

Chapter 3: Clients and Victims

Gender, Race, and Ethnicity of APS Clients and Victims

Women represent a larger proportion of APS clients and victims than men. Although very few states collect information on transgender individuals, 0.02% of clients and 0.03% of maltreatment victims are identified as transgender in the NAMRS data. In looking at gender differences for the different types of maltreatment (see Appendix Exhibit A.3), women are more likely than men to be victims of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.



Women are
58.3% of clients
53.5% of victims

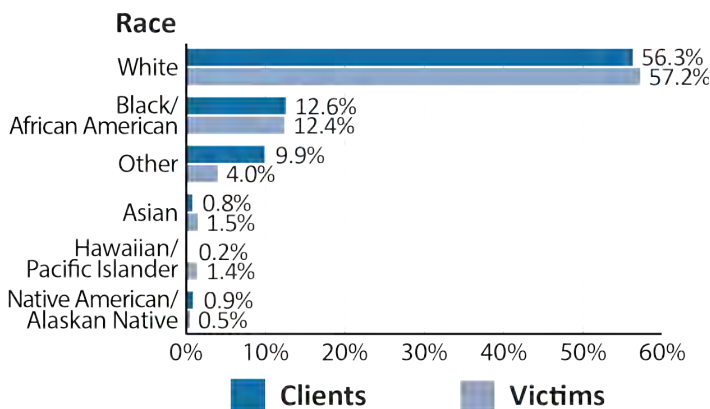
Men are
39.5% of clients
38.9% of victims



APS programs do not report race and ethnicity data as consistently as gender. For that reason, the percentages in Exhibits 3.2 and 3.3 may not be representative of all clients and victims.

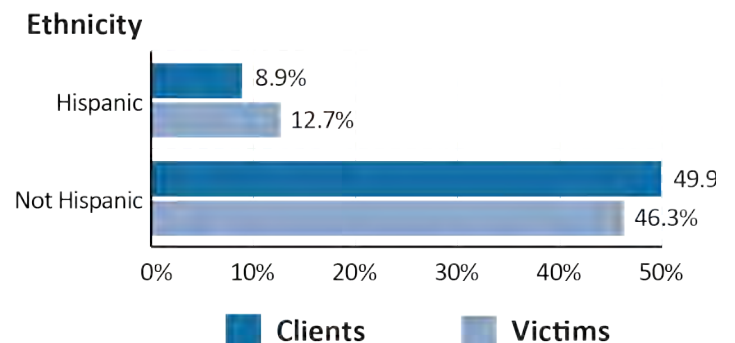
Although there are no notable differences between victims and clients within racial categories, Exhibit 3.3 shows that substantiation rates are slightly higher for Hispanic individuals than for non-Hispanic individuals.

Exhibit 3.2: APS Clients and Victims by Race



Note: Based on 42 states submitting data for 219,564 victims and 31 states submitting data for 430,164 clients. Race was listed as Unknown for 23.3% of victims and 19.9% of clients.

Exhibit 3.3: APS Clients and Victims by Ethnicity



Note: Based on 39 states submitting data for 222,536 victims and 27 states submitting data for 399,521 clients. Ethnicity was listed as Unknown for 41.0% of victims and 41.2% of clients.

Chapter 3: Clients and Victims

Disabilities Impacting APS Clients and Victims

Following the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), NAMRS defines a disability for clients and victims as the “physical, emotional, and mental health issues that result in limitation in activities and restrictions to fully participate at school, work, or in the community. A client [victim] can have multiple disabilities.” A person’s disability status may be a factor in determining whether the individual meets the APS program eligibility criteria, and it is also a critical factor to consider in an APS investigation. Functional limitations caused by disabilities may impair an individual’s ability to live independently, self-protect, and/or provide self-care. Understanding the impact of disabilities on the client or victim is important in developing a plan to meet their service needs.

For the states reporting disability information, 6.9% of clients were assessed to have no disability, while 2.4 % of victims were assessed at having no disability. The most frequent type of disability for victims of adult maltreatment, as shown in Exhibit 3.4, is ambulatory difficulties and the most frequent type of disability for APS clients is cognitive impairment.



How does NAMRS define disability?

A disability is the “client’s [victim’s] physical, emotional, and mental health issues that result in limitation in activities and restrictions to fully participate at school, work, or in the community. A client [victim] can have multiple disabilities.”

Exhibit 3.4: APS Clients and Victims by Disability Type

Disability	Definition	% of Clients	% of Victims
Ambulatory Difficulty	Having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.	27.9%	37.6%
Cognitive Difficulty	Because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions.	29.2%	22.4%
Communication Difficulty	Because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty with speech or language.	5.1%	4.7%
Hearing Difficulty	Deaf or having serious difficulty hearing.	3.3%	3.6%
Independent Living Difficulty	Because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping.	26.9%	16.2%
Self-Care Difficulty	Having difficulty bathing or dressing.	13.8%	11.3%
Vision Difficulty	Blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses.	3.5%	4.7%
Other	Disabilities other than those specified in the categories provided.	19.6%	12.9%
None	Assessed, and no disability determined.	6.9%	2.4%

Note: Based on 19 states submitting data for 83,937 victims and 20 states submitting data for 268,678 clients, disability type was listed as Unknown for 39.2% of victims and 31.9% of clients. Multiple disabilities may be recorded for a single client or victim.

Chapter 3: Clients and Victims

APS Clients and Victims with Prior Reports

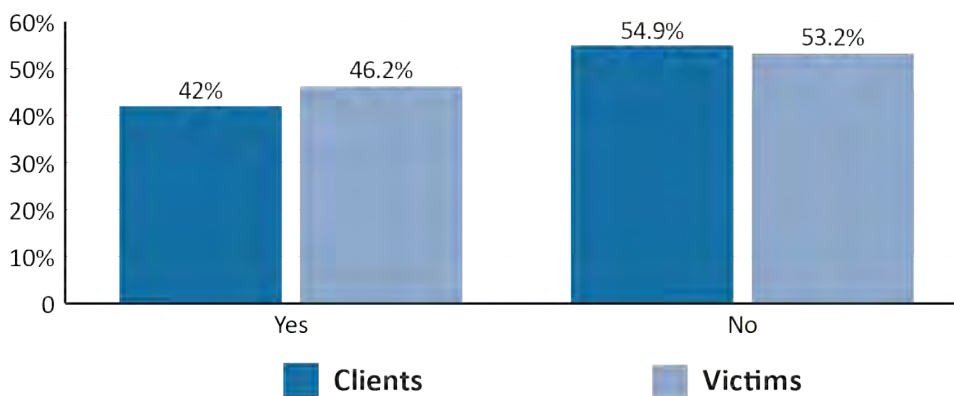
There are several reasons why clients and victims may have also been the subject of a previous APS report. Even though APS interventions address emergency needs and are intended to mitigate the root causes of the maltreatment, many factors contribute to maltreatment reoccurring, including known risk factors for the population, the lack of available or accessible services, and the client's right to decline intervention. Maltreatment victims are also at ongoing risk due to potential changes in their: financial, mental, or physical conditions; informal or formal support systems; and/or living situations.

A higher percentage of victims (46%) than clients (42%) had previous reports of maltreatment in the states that submitted this information (see Exhibit 3.5). Victims of abandonment, neglect, and self-neglect were the

subject of a previous report at higher rates than victims of other types of maltreatment (see Appendix Exhibit A.7).



Exhibit 3.5: APS Clients and Victims by Prior Reports



Note: Based on 16 states submitting data for 102,386 victims and 17 states submitting data for 320,068 clients, this information was Unknown for 3.2% of clients and 0.6% of victims.

Chapter 3: Clients and Victims

Residence of Victims of Adult Maltreatment

One concern often expressed about APS interventions is that victims are inappropriately placed in residential care facilities as a result of their involvement with APS. For victims who do experience a change in their living setting, the change may be the result of the maltreatment or other changes in life circumstances.

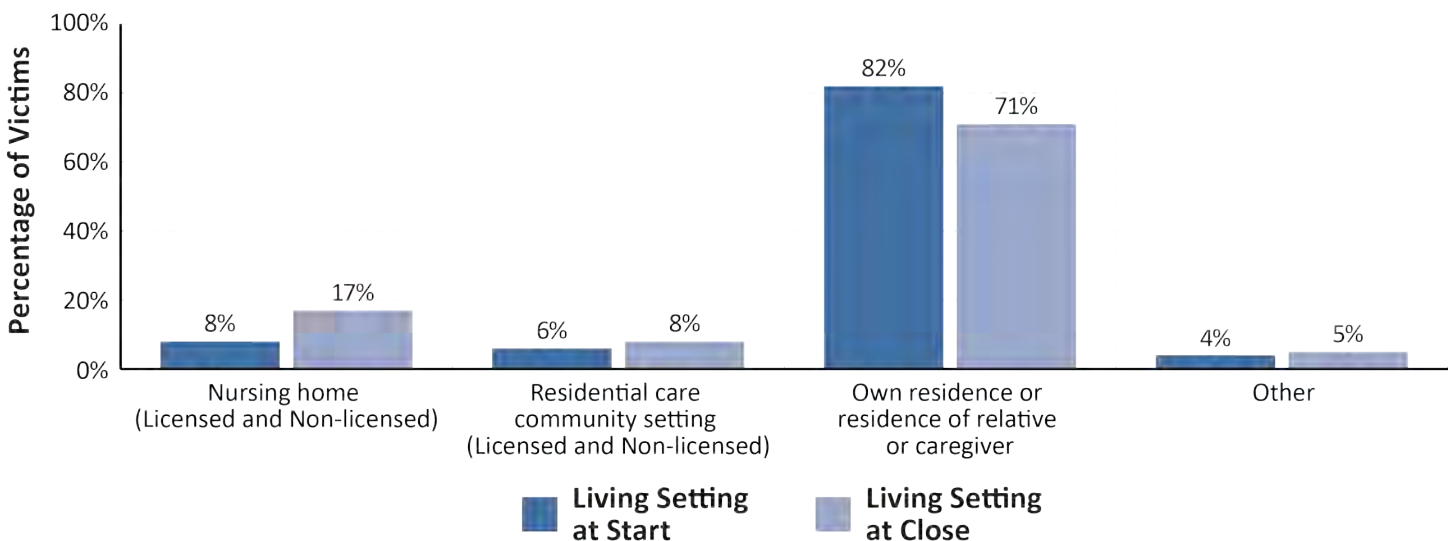
Only a small number of states submit data on the residence of victims at both the start and close of an APS case. Exhibit 3.6 provides the data for the 16,372 maltreatment victims with a known value for both Living Setting at Start and Living Setting at Close. As shown in the exhibit, at the beginning of APS cases, 14% of victims are in some type of provider setting

(nursing home or residential care community setting) and at the end of APS cases, 25% are in a provider setting. At the beginning of APS cases, 82% of victims are living in their own residence or residence of a relative or caregiver compared to 71% at the end of APS cases.

Some adult maltreatment victims **change living settings.**



Exhibit 3.6: Victims by Living Arrangement at Start and Close of APS Case



Note: Based on 12 states submitting data for 16,372 victims; victims with unknown data were excluded.

Chapter 4: Perpetrators

Perpetrators of Adult Maltreatment

In an APS case, a perpetrator is defined as “each person determined to be responsible for one or more maltreatments with a disposition of substantiated.” Although individual APS investigators might learn or obtain information about alleged perpetrators through the course of their investigation, historically APS programs have not systematically collected or recorded detailed demographic information on perpetrators to the same degree as they do for clients and victims. As a result, less than half of states submit the perpetrator data elements to NAMRS. The perpetrator data that have been reported to NAMRS provide the following insights:

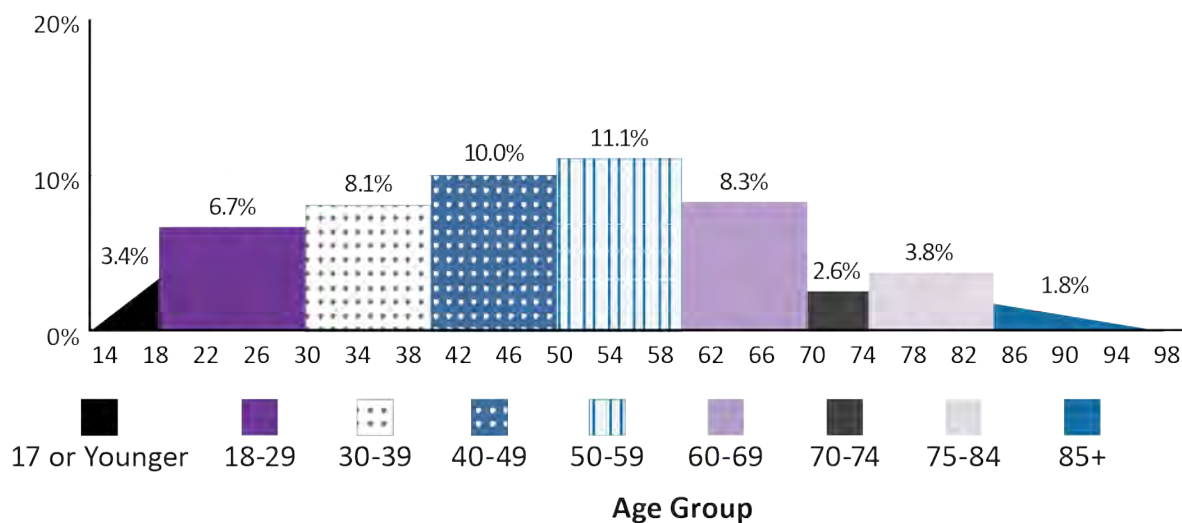
- Gender data were submitted for 47,003 perpetrators and were listed as “Unknown” in 21.6% of the cases. For the 27 states reporting perpetrator gender, women (41.5%) were overall slightly more likely than men (36.8%) to be listed as the

perpetrator. Perpetrator gender by maltreatment types revealed some variations. For example, in cases of abuse (physical, sexual, and emotional), the number of perpetrators who are men is higher, compared to all perpetrators (see Appendix Exhibit A.9 for complete data).

- For the states reporting victim-perpetrator relationship data, a third of the perpetrators (33.15%) had no familial relationship to the victim (see Appendix Exhibit A.10).



Exhibit 4.1: Perpetrators by Age



Note: Based on data submitted by 23 states. Although some states will name the victim in a self-neglect case as a perpetrator or “self-perpetrator,” the NAMRS data reported here does not include individuals identified in self-neglect cases as perpetrators.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In February 2020, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reauthorized the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to continue to collect NAMRS data for three more years. (No changes were requested in the data elements.) With NAMRS data collection moving into its fifth year, researchers, APS professionals, and program stakeholders are ready to begin exploring the possibilities of how to use the data in new ways to enhance the effectiveness of APS programs.

State participation in NAMRS is voluntary. Even so, 85% of states submitted either Key Indicator or Case Component data, accounting for 72% of the APS-eligible population in the United States. Almost two-thirds of the states submitted Case Component data.

In a promising trend, even more states are anticipated to switch from Key Indicator to Case Component data in the next couple of years.

While the quantity and consistency of data submissions has improved each year since NAMRS' implementation in FFY 2016, this year the Adult Protective Services Technical Assistance Resource Center (APS TARC) undertook the first comprehensive analysis of the gaps and completeness of the data submitted by states. The purpose was to better understand how the data can and cannot be used; target potential, realistic areas for improvement; and inform potential future changes in the data elements.

NAMRS was designed with aspirational data elements—that is, data elements were based on what the field and APS programs want to know about adult maltreatment, even if many states are not currently collecting that data in a uniform way. The gap analysis has revealed how that balance has worked out over the last four years. We have learned that:



- With few exceptions, states submitted data on a timely basis.
- There is significant variation in the completeness of data across states and data elements. Few states can provide information for most of the data elements, and those that provide more data elements tend to have more gaps in their data (i.e., many of the data elements submitted have a large amount of unknown data). With NAMRS, states that provide fewer data elements tend to provide more complete (less unknown) data for the data elements they submit. This suggests there is a trade-off between how many data elements to collect data on and how many gaps there are in the data.
- APS client and victim demographic elements have the most complete data.
- NAMRS submission validation rules and edit checks help ensure consistency of data, but these do not assess for reporting accuracy. Review of data consistency and accuracy indicates there is room for improvement. For example, review of the use of the “Other” category indicates there may be instances when it is used inappropriately. Accuracy in these instances might be improved by modifying the data values so that “Other” is not the best selection.

States continue to be enthusiastic about participation in NAMRS. One area of continued improvement that they have expressed interest in is how to use NAMRS


Chapter 5: Conclusion

data to improve their programs. Among other things, the APS TARC has used the data:

- to answer technical assistance questions from programs,
- to answer reporters' questions,
- to inform various federal studies
- as a resource the APS TARC system evaluation of APS programs,
- as part of a project to use predictive analytics to improve APS prevention activities, and
- in a multi-state comparison to identify ways to improve policy and practice.

Due to data sharing limitations, state-specific NAMRS data have not been used to help states compare and contrast their programs with other programs. There are, for example, no state-specific data in this report. Sharing state-specific data with individual states, which ACL is beginning to explore, and state-specific analyses has a number of potential advantages, such as allowing states to see how the phenomena of maltreatment as reported to APS in their state compares to other states, as well as shedding light on consistency and accuracy issues states could target for improvement their data.

Additionally, data has not be shared with researchers because of the need to “mature” the data set. For NAMRS, maturing the data means implementing strategies for improving data quality and completeness.



As the availability of comprehensive APS data increases, so will opportunities to use this information **to improve prevention and intervention strategies and outcomes** for vulnerable adults at risk of maltreatment.

This is done to help ensure that the data is consistent, and is important for avoiding inaccurate conclusions from the data.

Beyond exploring how to analyze and share state-



specific data, the APS TARC will continue to develop and share information of interest to the field. Some areas of interest where NAMRS data can help provide a better understanding are:

- Disparities in disposition rates between maltreatment types.
- Differences and similarities in the characteristics of self-neglect cases and the other forms of maltreatment.
- Differences and similarities in reports from mandatory reporters versus other reporters of adult maltreatment.
- Impact of interagency coordination on report disposition.
- Client declination or non-participation rates.
- Case closure reasons.

In addition to improving the analysis of NAMRS data, ACL and the APS TARC are committed to improving the data system itself. We will continue to work closely with system users to identify and make enhancements. We have also begun discussions with states on ways to improve the data set.

NAMRS has sparked significant improvements in APS data collection and submission, and subsequently in our understanding of adult maltreatment. ACL and the APS TARC are committed to providing on-going support to states with their data collection and reporting, so that NAMRS continues to evolve and serve as a resource to improve both the prevention of, and response to, adult maltreatment.

Appendix

The following exhibits provide expanded data tables for the information discussed in this report.

Exhibit A.1: Victim Maltreatment Type by Case Closure Reason

Close Reason	Abandonment	Emotional Abuse	Exploitation	Neglect	Other	Physical Abuse	Self-neglect	Sexual Abuse	All Victims
Investigation completed	55.0%	24.7%	42.1%	30.3%	44.6%	38.9%	26.8%	27.0%	30.7%
Investigation completed and protective services case completed	7.5%	31.3%	27.6%	33.8%	17.2%	34.3%	51.3%	35.5%	44.5%
Investigation unable to be completed (non-specific)	6.8%	0.6%	0.7%	0.5%	4.0%	0.6%	1.4%	0.8%	1.3%
Investigation unable to be completed due to death of client during investigation	0.5%	0.7%	0.8%	2.2%	1.2%	0.6%	2.3%	0.2%	1.9%
Investigation unable to be completed due to refusal of client	1.7%	2.2%	1.1%	0.5%	0.8%	1.5%	3.9%	0.2%	3.1%
Other	23.5%	21.6%	14.9%	21.4%	16.9%	11.9%	6.8%	23.4%	9.7%
Protective services case closed due to client decision to not continue	0.8%	15.4%	7.1%	4.8%	7.3%	9.3%	4.2%	10.1%	5.1%
Protective services case closed due to death of client	0.1%	0.6%	0.9%	2.5%	1.1%	0.6%	1.1%	0.4%	1.1%
Protective services case opened but not completed (non-specific)	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	3.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%
Unknown	4.0%	2.4%	4.4%	3.5%	3.3%	2.2%	1.9%	1.5%	2.2%
Total	997	7,290	15,750	11,844	4,273	8,500	84,047	825	120,400

Note: Based on data from 26 states.

Appendix

Exhibit A.2: Victim Maltreatment Type by Age

Age	Abandonment	Emotional Abuse	Exploitation	Neglect	Other	Physical Abuse	Self-neglect	Sexual Abuse	All Victims
Age 18-29	9.1%	5.5%	2.6%	7.8%	8.5%	8.5%	2.4%	33.8%	3.8%
Age 30-39	6.4%	3.8%	2.2%	4.3%	5.2%	4.8%	2.5%	13.6%	2.9%
Age 40-49	10.2%	4.5%	2.4%	4.8%	5.8%	4.9%	4.3%	11.4%	4.2%
Age 50-59	18.3%	10.0%	5.6%	8.8%	12.2%	9.0%	11.4%	8.9%	10.2%
Age 60-69	25.8%	23.2%	19.7%	15.6%	19.9%	22.1%	26.0%	10.6%	23.7%
Age 70-74	8.1%	14.2%	15.9%	11.0%	11.7%	13.9%	15.6%	5.4%	14.8%
Age 75-84	13.7%	24.6%	30.3%	24.2%	22.2%	21.7%	24.5%	8.2%	24.9%
Age 85+	6.9%	12.5%	19.7%	21.9%	13.5%	13.8%	12.3%	7.5%	14.3%
Unknown	1.4%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.0%	1.3%	1.0%	0.7%	1.1%
TOTAL	1,008	8,480	17,531	15,234	4,609	9,381	88,346	957	131,751

Note: Based on data from 31 states.

Exhibit A.3: Victim Maltreatment Type by Gender

Gender Identity	Abandonment	Emotional Abuse	Exploitation	Neglect	Other	Physical Abuse	Self-neglect	Sexual Abuse	All Victims
Female	52.7%	71.1%	58.5%	59.7%	59.1%	63.7%	56.0%	78.7%	57.8%
Male	47.1%	27.7%	38.6%	38.9%	40.4%	35.1%	43.1%	20.1%	40.9%
Transgender	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%
Unknown	0.2%	1.1%	3.0%	1.3%	0.5%	1.1%	0.8%	1.0%	1.2%
TOTAL	1,008	8,480	17,531	15,234	4,609	9,381	88,346	957	131,751

Note: Based on data from 31 states.

Appendix

Exhibit A.4: Victim Maltreatment Type by Race

Race	Abandonment	Emotional Abuse	Exploitation	Neglect	Other	Physical Abuse	Self-neglect	Sexual Abuse	All Victims
White	69.5%	63.5%	54.0%	58.7%	64.0%	67.9%	65.0%	67.9%	62.6%
Black/African American	12.6%	12.7%	11.3%	15.1%	7.5%	12.2%	15.1%	12.9%	13.9%
Other	1.8%	10.8%	7.0%	13.0%	4.3%	6.0%	1.2%	5.3%	4.3%
Asian	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Native American/ Alaskan Native	0.4%	0.5%	0.9%	0.9%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%	0.6%

Note: Based on data from 30 states. States may select multiple values for an individual. Race was listed as Unknown for 18.3% of individuals.

Exhibit A.5: Victim Maltreatment Type by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Abandonment	Emotional Abuse	Exploitation	Neglect	Other	Physical Abuse	Self-neglect	Sexual Abuse	All Victims
Not Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish	54.1%	58.8%	44.6%	53.7%	47.3%	63.0%	60.3%	60.5%	57.9%
Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish	1.9%	5.4%	3.1%	5.0%	0.8%	7.9%	14.4%	6.1%	11.2%
Unknown	44.0%	35.8%	52.3%	41.3%	51.8%	29.1%	25.3%	33.4%	30.9%
Victims	997	7,430	16,032	12,988	4,488	8,797	87,137	885	125,214

Note: Based on data from 26 states. States may select multiple values for an individual.

Appendix

Exhibit A.6: Victim Maltreatment Type by Disability

Disability	Abandonment	Emotional Abuse	Exploitation	Neglect	Other	Physical Abuse	Self-neglect	Sexual Abuse	All Victims
Ambulatory Issues	46.7%	23.6%	27.9%	36.2%	46.9%	24.6%	40.4%	14.0%	37.6%
Cognitive Issues	57.8%	20.8%	31.2%	40.2%	53.4%	21.1%	19.8%	42.6%	22.4%
Communication Issues	13.3%	6.3%	6.5%	11.1%	26.4%	5.4%	3.7%	5.2%	4.7%
Hearing Issues	3.3%	6.1%	6.2%	4.8%	11.2%	3.9%	3.0%	3.3%	3.6%
Independent Living Issues	74.4%	25.0%	30.0%	36.6%	58.6%	20.9%	12.3%	25.8%	16.2%
Self-Care Issues	40.0%	14.9%	17.8%	24.7%	39.7%	16.4%	8.7%	14.0%	11.3%
Vision Issues	11.1%	7.1%	6.0%	4.8%	11.5%	4.7%	4.4%	2.7%	4.7%
Other Issues	34.4%	38.4%	30.6%	28.4%	53.5%	19.8%	7.9%	28.3%	12.9%
No Disability Identified	3.3%	4.8%	7.6%	2.3%	2.3%	10.0%	1.2%	1.6%	2.4%
Unknown	2.2%	34.3%	27.4%	27.5%	20.1%	33.1%	42.3%	27.7%	39.2%
TOTAL	90	3,748	8,527	7,332	949	4,988	65,560	364	83,937

Note: Based on data from 19 states. States may select multiple disabilities for an individual.

Exhibit A.7: Victim Maltreatment Type by Prior Report

Previous Report	Abandonment	Emotional Abuse	Exploitation	Neglect	Other	Physical Abuse	Self-neglect	Sexual Abuse	All Victims
Yes	58.0%	41.8%	40.0%	48.2%	50.8%	42.7%	47.4%	42.0%	46.2%
No	42.0%	57.5%	58.6%	50.5%	49.1%	56.0%	52.2%	56.3%	53.2%
Unknown	0.0%	0.7%	1.5%	1.3%	0.0%	1.3%	0.4%	1.7%	0.6%
TOTAL	935	6097	10,396	9,334	2,573	7,460	74,843	652	102,386

Note: Based on data from 16 states.

Appendix

Exhibit A.8: Substantiated Maltreatment Type by Perpetrator Age Group

Age	Abandonment	Emotional Abuse	Exploitation	Neglect	Other	Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse	All Perpetrators
Age 17 and younger	0.0%	2.0%	2.4%	4.5%	1.5%	5.0%	5.7%	3.4%
Age 18-29	6.8%	7.5%	5.5%	4.8%	8.9%	9.4%	9.5%	6.7%
Age 30-39	10.0%	9.6%	9.0%	5.7%	6.2%	10.1%	7.1%	8.1%
Age 40-49	13.7%	11.6%	10.8%	8.3%	6.4%	11.5%	9.1%	10.0%
Age 50-59	18.5%	12.3%	10.0%	11.2%	10.5%	11.4%	12.1%	11.1%
Age 60-69	24.3%	8.6%	5.3%	8.5%	13.7%	7.2%	10.6%	8.3%
Age 70-74	6.5%	3.0%	0.9%	2.5%	5.9%	3.1%	2.2%	2.6%
Age 75-84	5.7%	3.4%	1.0%	3.6%	12.0%	4.2%	2.0%	3.8%
Age 85+	1.1%	1.4%	0.7%	1.6%	5.0%	2.3%	1.5%	1.8%
Unknown	13.4%	40.5%	54.4%	49.1%	29.9%	35.8%	40.2%	44.1%
TOTAL	897	6,116	12,900	10,858	3,479	6,436	453	35,895

Note: Based on data from 23 states.

Exhibit A.9: Substantiated Maltreatment Type by Perpetrator Gender

Gender Identity	Abandonment	Emotional Abuse	Exploitation	Neglect	Other	Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse	All Perpetrators
Female	53.3%	37.6%	42.6%	44.4%	56.1%	35.8%	10.7%	41.5%
Male	40.9%	46.1%	32.5%	30.9%	36.7%	47.9%	67.2%	36.8%
Transgender	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Unknown	5.8%	16.2%	24.9%	24.6%	7.1%	16.3%	22.1%	21.6%
TOTAL	1,007	8,394	16,188	14,859	3,483	9,150	911	47,003

Note: Based on data from 27 states.

Appendix

Exhibit A.10: Perpetrator Relationship

Relationship Type	Count	Percentage of Relationships
Child	9,122	22.7%
Spouse/Domestic Partner	3,837	9.5%
Grandchild	1,662	4.1%
Grandparent	29	0.1%
None	13,346	33.1%
Other Relative	4,294	10.7%
Parent	1,775	4.4%
Sibling	882	2.2%
Unknown	3,806	9.5%
Yes (Not Specified)	1,512	3.8%
TOTAL	40,265	100.0%

Based on data from 26 states.