

- The Adult Protective Services Program serves adults over the age of 18 who are at risk of mistreatment or self-neglect.
  - In Colorado, a large majority of adult protection cases involve self-neglect.
  - Counties are responsible for taking referrals and completing assessments to determine the appropriate services.
  - Colorado Statute provides the framework for counties to administer the Adult Protective Services Program.
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## **ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES OVERVIEW**

The purpose of the Adult Protective Services program is to protect adults who cannot protect themselves. These adults are known as “at-risk adults.” They are considered to be at-risk of mistreatment or self-neglect because:

- They are unable to protect themselves; and/or
- They are unable to perform or arrange for services that will help them to protect their health and safety. For example, they may be unable to obtain medical treatment, financial assistance, meals, or home health assistance; and/or
- They lack sufficient understanding or lack the capacity to make or communicate decisions that keep them safe and healthy.

In Colorado, Adult Protective Services investigates reports of self and caretaker neglect, financial and other forms of exploitation, and physical and sexual abuse. Family members account for nearly three-quarters of all perpetrators of adult abuse.

### **Legal Authority for Adult Protective Services**

The statutory authority for Adult Protective Services is contained in Parts 1 and 2 of Colorado Statute, Title 26 - Human Services Code: Article 3.1 - “Protective Services for Adults At Risk of Mistreatment or Self-Neglect.” Part 1, Protective Services for At-Risk Adults gives direct statutory authority to the County Departments of Social (Human) Services to provide protective services to at-risk adults. Part 2, Financial Exploitation of At-Risk Adults strongly urges employees of financial institutions and other professional groups to report observed and suspected financial exploitation of at-risk adults to the Adult Protective Services program within the County Departments of Social (Human) Services. No other program entity in Colorado has the statutory authority to execute adult protective services.

### **Adult Protection Caseloads**

As of March 2011, there were **2,217** open Adult Protective Services cases within the State.