

New Law Promotes Prevention of Abuse for Vulnerable Adults

The provincial government has updated critical legislation to better protect vulnerable Albertans from abuse. This includes the new *Protection for Persons in Care Act*, which came into force on July 1, 2010.

The new Act makes many improvements to the old legislation it replaces by increasing the emphasis on preventing abuse before it happens. Under the new Act, all publicly funded service providers – those funded by the government of Alberta – must do all they can to prevent abuse from happening. Those service providers are responsible for keeping clients safe from abuse.

The Act also requires that all suspected abuse be reported. In fact, not reporting abuse is an offence. While service providers are responsible for doing all they can to prevent abuse, everyone must share this responsibility. Every person who interacts with vulnerable adults has a responsibility to keep them safe from harm. If you ever suspect abuse, or if you want more information about reporting abuse, call the toll-free Information and Reporting Line at 1-888-357-9339. If someone is in immediate danger, call local police.

The new Act works together with other pieces of recently introduced legislation to better support and protect vulnerable adults. These include the *Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act*, which has a process to review the suitability of potential co-decision makers, trustees and guardians of vulnerable Albertans. As well, the *Supportive Living Accommodation Licensing Act* allows the Alberta government to carry out a full range of activities associated with licensing supportive living facilities, including monitoring, compliance management and investigating complaints.

For more information on these three Acts, go to www.seniors.alberta.ca or call the toll-free Information and Reporting Line at 1-888-357-9339.