

CareCertify LLC

Assisted Living Training Series

AL-03

Maltreatment Reporting

Participant Guide

Assisted Living Training Series · Audience: HHAs · CNAs · PCAs · DSPs · AL Staff · CE Hours: 1.0

You Are a Mandated Reporter

The Vulnerable Adults Act (Minn. Stat. 626.557) exists because some adults depend on others for care and are at heightened risk of harm. Assisted living staff are mandated reporters: the law requires you to report suspected maltreatment. Every resident in your facility meets the definition of a vulnerable adult.

This guide tells you what counts as maltreatment, what to watch for, and exactly how to report. The standard is low on purpose — 'reason to believe' — because the cost of staying silent is a resident left in harm.

Learning Objectives — by the end of this module you will be able to:

- Define 'vulnerable adult' and identify who is a mandated reporter
- Distinguish abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation
- Recognize common warning signs
- Report suspected maltreatment to MAARC correctly and immediately
- Explain reporter protections and the ban on retaliation

Section 1: Who Is Protected and Who Must Report

Under Minn. Stat. 626.5572, a vulnerable adult includes any adult who is a resident or receives services from a licensed facility such as an assisted living facility. In practice, every resident you serve is a vulnerable adult.

Mandated reporters include employees of the facility. The obligation is individual: if you personally have reason to believe maltreatment occurred, you must report — even if you assume someone else will.

Section 2: Abuse

Abuse includes physical abuse (hitting, rough handling, improper use of restraints), sexual abuse (any non-consensual sexual contact), and emotional or verbal abuse (threats, humiliation, intimidation, isolation). Unauthorized use of restraints is itself a form of abuse.

Section 3: Neglect

Neglect is the failure — by the facility or a caregiver — to supply the food, water, clothing, shelter, hygiene, supervision, health care, or medication a resident needs. Self-neglect, when a vulnerable adult cannot meet their own basic needs, is also addressed under the Act.

Section 4: Financial Exploitation

Financial exploitation is the wrongful use of a vulnerable adult's money or property — theft, misuse of funds or accounts, or coercion over assets. Watch for missing belongings, unusual banking activity, or someone new exerting control over a resident's finances.

Section 5: Recognizing the Warning Signs

Maltreatment is not always obvious. Physical signs include unexplained bruises, burns, fractures, pressure injuries, sudden weight loss, dehydration, or poor hygiene. Behavioral signs include fearfulness around a caregiver, withdrawal, or sudden mood changes. You do not need proof — a pattern, a single alarming sign, or a disclosure is enough.

The standard is 'reason to believe'

You are not the investigator. If you have reason to believe maltreatment occurred, report. Certainty is not required and not your job.

Section 6: How and When to Report

Reports go to the Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center (MAARC), the statewide common entry point, at 1-844-880-1574, 24 hours a day. Report immediately. If a resident faces immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 911 first, then MAARC.

Give the facts you have: the resident's name and condition, what you observed or were told, when and where, who was involved, and whether there is ongoing danger.

Section 7: Internal Reporting Is Not a Substitute

Reporting to your supervisor is expected and good practice, but it does not satisfy your personal legal duty to report to MAARC. The facility also has its own reporting and response obligations, but those do not replace yours either.

Section 8: Reporter Protections and Retaliation

The Act protects people who report in good faith from civil and criminal liability and prohibits retaliation against a reporter or the vulnerable adult. A mandated reporter who knows of maltreatment and fails to report can face personal consequences. These protections exist so you never have to choose between your job and a resident's safety.

Section 9: After the Report

Once you report, MAARC routes it to the appropriate lead investigative agency. Your job is to keep the resident safe, continue providing care, cooperate with any investigation, and document the facts objectively — what you saw and heard, without speculation.

Key Terms

Term	What it means
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Vulnerable Adults Act	Minn. Stat. 626.557, requiring reporting of maltreatment of vulnerable adults.
Vulnerable adult	An adult who receives services from a licensed facility or cannot protect themselves; all residents qualify.
Mandated reporter	A person legally required to report suspected maltreatment; assisted living staff qualify.
MAARC	Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center — the common entry point (1-844-880-1574).
Neglect	Failure to provide needed food, care, hygiene, supervision, or medication.
Financial exploitation	Wrongful use of a vulnerable adult's money or property.

Check Your Understanding

1. Who is a vulnerable adult, and are all residents included?
2. Name the three categories of maltreatment with an example of each.
3. What is the reporting standard — do you need proof?
4. What is the MAARC number, and how fast must you report?
5. Does reporting to your supervisor satisfy your legal duty?

What's Next

Looking ahead

Next, AL-04: Medication Support covers safe medication assistance, RN delegation under the Nurse Practice Act, and accurate administration.