



**CONTACT:** DOEA Office of Communications  
[communications@elderaffairs.org](mailto:communications@elderaffairs.org)  
850-414-2000

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Department of Elder Affairs Recognizes Elder Abuse Awareness Day**  
*~ Encourages All Floridians to Help Prevent Elder Abuse ~*

**TALLAHASSEE** – In recognition of June 15 as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and to help build safer communities for Florida’s 5.2 million seniors, the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) encourages all Floridians to educate themselves about elder abuse and how to report any suspicion or knowledge of elder abuse, while also working to end all forms of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. To mark the awareness day, the Department is hosting an Elder Abuse and Fraud Prevention Summit in Tallahassee. Governor Rick Scott has issued a proclamation recognizing June 15 as Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Florida, which is available at [www.elderaffairs.org](http://www.elderaffairs.org).

In the last fiscal year, the Florida Department of Children and Families received nearly 54,000 reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of Florida elders. Nearly 8,500 of them, or 16 percent were reports of financial exploitation – the third largest category of reported abuse.

“We all have a role to play in protecting our seniors,” said Department of Elder Affairs Secretary Jeffrey Bragg. “With this summit, we hope to educate Florida families about the signs of abuse, prevention tactics, and how to report known or suspected abuse. We must all work together to end this intolerable act of abuse against our seniors.”

At the Department of Elder Affairs, the Elder Abuse Prevention Program works to educate all Floridians, including seniors, caregivers, family members, and professionals who come in contact with seniors about the prevention of abuse, as well as the signs for which to watch.

If you are a victim or suspect elder abuse, please contact the Florida Elder Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873). If you would like more information about the Department’s Elder Abuse Prevention Program, contact the Department of Elder Affairs at 850-414-2000.

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*The Department of Elder Affairs, the State Unit on Aging, helps Florida’s elders to remain healthy, safe, and independent. For more information, please visit [elderaffairs.org](http://elderaffairs.org)*