



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

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Pa. Advisory Council on Elder Justice in the Courts, Elder Justice Partners Host Virtual Town Hall on Preventing and Responding to Financial Exploitation

HARRISBURG — Recognizing the importance of identifying and understanding elder abuse for one of Pa.'s most vulnerable populations, the Pa. Advisory Council on Elder Justice in the Courts and its elder justice partners today hosted a virtual town hall discussion on preventing and responding to financial exploitation.

“In today’s environment, where new scams continuously emerge, it’s paramount that we all take steps to protect Pennsylvania’s elders and vulnerable adults from financial abuse,” said Pa. Supreme Court Justice Debra Todd. “Many elders are at risk of financial abuse, whether through financial scams perpetrated by strangers or financial exploitation committed by family or friends.

“By building a system of checks and balances, elders (together with their families and trusted financial advisors) can more effectively safeguard their finances from exploitation and manipulation.”

In Pennsylvania, statewide reports of elder abuse, including financial exploitation, neglect and physical, emotional and sexual abuse, have increased by 80 percent over the past five years. Isolation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic has also contributed to making older Pennsylvanians vulnerable to abuse.

Today’s discussion was part two of a two-part virtual town hall discussion aimed at preventing and responding to elder abuse. The first town hall on June 16 addressed understanding and identifying elder abuse, and can be viewed [here](#).

Panelists that participated in today’s virtual town hall included:

- Hon. Sheila Woods-Skipper, moderator and administrative judge, Orphans’ Court Division, Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas
- David Shallcross, director, Office of Public Engagement, Pa. Office of Attorney General
- Denise Getgen, director, Adult Protective Services, Pa. Department of Aging
- Katrina Boyer, investor education coordinator, Pa. Department of Banking and Securities
- Dana Goldberg, legal director, SeniorLAW Center

- Amanda Cassel, victim testimonial

Through the discussion, participants heard from both victims and panelists about their experiences with financial exploitation, what Pennsylvania’s courts and justice partners are doing to address this issue, how to recognize financial exploitation, what to do if this type of abuse is suspected and available resources.

This educational event was made possible by partnerships between the Pa. Department of Aging, Pa. Office of Attorney General, Pa. Department of Banking and Securities, SeniorLAW Center and the Pa. Judiciary.

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