*Pennington County Human Services*

PO Box 340

Thief River Falls, MN 56701-0340

* + 1. FAX: 218-683-7013

**PENNINGTON COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES**

**Guidelines for Prioritizing Reports for Investigation**

**As Directed by MN Statute 626.557 Subd. 9b**

Pennington County Human Services developed the following Adult Protection Prioritization Guidelines as required per MN Statute 626.557 Subd. 10b for use when Pennington County Human Services is the Lead Investigative Agency for Adult Protective Services and/or Emergency Protective Services in adult maltreatment reports received by the Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center (MAARC). The response will be with the intent to prevent further maltreatment and for safeguarding the welfare of the maltreated vulnerable adult, per MN Statute 626.557 Subd.10a**.**

Reports will be screened using the current Department of Human Services Structured Decision-Making Manual and the SSIS Adult Protection Intake Assessment and Response Priority and Adult Protection EPS Intake Assessment Screening decision tools. The vulnerable adult in the report must meet the criteria of a vulnerable adult per MN Statute 626.5572 Subd. 21 and at least one allegation must meet criteria per MN Statute 626.5572 Subd. 2,9 and 17 for a report to be screened in for investigation. The Lead Agency will respond to MAARC reports received per the outcome of the SSIS Adult Protection EPS Intake Assessment Screening decision tool with the exceptions of the following screening override options:

1. Self-neglect can be resolved through case management or other current formal/informal services.
2. Vulnerable Adult is deceased at the time of the report, the report may be screened out.
3. Vulnerable Adult is no longer in the state of Minnesota at the time of the report and the maltreatment occurred in another state.
4. Vulnerable Adult is incarcerated at the time of the report. Pennington County Human Services will coordinate with Law Enforcement on any vulnerable adult reports involving inmates while incarcerated.
5. When there is no benefit to the vulnerable adult from adult protective services or investigation because maltreatment has been resolved with minimal risk of repeat maltreatment.
6. Reports involving abuse/neglect of one vulnerable adult to another vulnerable adult may be screened out if there is no benefit to the vulnerable adult for adult protective case management. If the vulnerable adult(s) have case managers, this will be referred to case management to address through risk mitigation, education, and care planning.
7. Reports in which a minor is the alleged perpetrator may be screened out and a consultation/recommendation may be sought from Child Protective Services (CPS). In a case where the maltreatment that occurred when the victim/vulnerable adult was under age 18 and is not reported until victim/vulnerable adult is 18 or over this must be reported to Child Protection and screened out of adult protection.
8. Cases alleging financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult may not be accepted for investigation unless the report demonstrates that there was a significant impact to the vulnerable adult. The amount of the alleged loss of funds will or is likely to adversely deprive the vulnerable adult of necessary food, clothing, shelter, health, and medical care.
9. Reports involving a vulnerable adult and a financial exploitation allegation based solely on an alleged perpetrator not paying a bill(s) may be screened out as this alone does not meet the financial exploitation definition.
10. Pennington County may screen out vulnerable adult reports with an allegation of financial exploitation by a scammer when a prior investigation with the vulnerable adult occurred in which it was determined that the vulnerable adult does not lack capacity to make their own decisions and has provided education and resources on how to avoid future incidents. If additional information is given that indicates the vulnerable adult’s mental capacity has changed, we may consider screening in to determine VA status.
11. When the allegation is significantly similar in nature to one investigated within the past year, and the vulnerable adult meets categorical criteria and not functional criteria, and that investigation determined the vulnerable adult is making an informed decision the report may be screened out.
12. Pennington County Human Services values a person’ right to self-determination of medical care and treatment, therefore, may not investigate reports where the adult, who is not impaired in judgment or capacity by mental or emotional dysfunction or undue influence, has clearly expressed their desires and decision for refusing medical treatment/medication and is able to articulate the potential consequences of their decision.
13. Reports involving only allegations of theft of narcotics or theft of property from a vulnerable adult may be screened out if no other allegation criteria is met and/or there is no benefit to the vulnerable adult for adult protective case management services. These reports will be referred to the local law enforcement agency or drug task force for potential criminal investigation/charges.
14. Reports requesting an emergency Guardianship/Conservatorship may be screened out when Guardianship/Conservatorship is not necessary to protect the vulnerable adult from maltreatment and less restrictive alternatives have not been exhausted.
15. If the vulnerable adult is on the Red Lake Nation Reservation at the time of the report, lives on the Red Lake Nation Reservation, or is a member of the Red Lake Nation, Pennington County Human Services will refer these reports to the Red Lake Nation Adult Protection Unit at the Red Lake Nation Human Services office.

**Principles of Adult Protection**

1. When interests compete, the adult client is the only person you are charged to serve; not the community concerned about safety, the landlords concerned about property, citizens concerned about crime or morality, or families concerned about their own health or finances.
2. When interests compete, the adult client is in charge of decision making until he or she delegates the responsibility voluntarily to another or the court grants responsibility to another.
3. A person can choose to live in harm or even self destructively, provided he or she is competent to choose, does not harm others and commits no crimes. Freedom is more important than safety.
4. In serving the adult client, the full range of social work skills must be used to assure the client is fully aware of alternatives and can make an informed choice and understands the consequences of choice.