

# The Protection for Persons in Care Act (PPCA)

Among other duties, every service provider funded by the Alberta government that provides care or support to an adult client is required to:

- take reasonable steps to protect the client from abuse while providing care or support services
- maintain a reasonable level of safety for the client.

Please consult the legislation for the full list of service provider’s responsibilities under the PPCA.

Service providers include:

- hospitals
- nursing homes
- seniors’ lodges
- mental health facilities
- shelters
- group homes
- addictions treatment centres
- supportive living facilities
- persons with developmental disabilities (PDD) programs (family-managed services excluded).

## Definitions of Abuse

The PPCA defines abuse as an act omission that:

- causes serious bodily harm
- causes serious emotional harm
- results in the administration, withholding or prescribing of medication for an inappropriate purpose, resulting in serious bodily harm
- subjects the client to non-consensual sexual contact, activity or behaviour
- involves misappropriating, or improperly or illegally converting a significant amount of money or other valuable possessions
- results in failing to provide adequate nutrition, adequate medical attention or another necessity of life without valid consent, resulting in serious bodily harm



## Contact Information

**If it is an immediate crisis and a person’s life or safety is in immediate danger, or if the abuse is criminal in nature, please contact the police.**

- Call the Protection for Persons in Care reporting line, Monday to Friday (8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.):
- 1-888-357-9339 (Alberta only)
- 780-422-1155 (out of province)

**Note: This is not a crisis line**

- If the incident involves a professional, such as a nurse or physician, a report of abuse may be made directly to the applicable professional association.
- Call the Mental Health Patient Advocate if the abuse involves a client detained in a mental health facility or is subject to a Community Treatment order.

For more information on the PPCA or to order brochures, please call the Protection for Persons in Care reporting line or email [health.ppc@gov.ab.ca](mailto:health.ppc@gov.ab.ca)

### Mailing Address:

Protection for Persons in Care  
Station M, Box 476  
Edmonton, AB T5J 2K1  
Fax: 780-415-8611

**Visit the website at:** [alberta.ca/ppc](http://alberta.ca/ppc)

# Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults from Abuse



## Protection for Persons in Care Act

## Reporting Abuse

The Protection for Persons in Care Act (PPCA) states that anyone who believes that there is or has been abuse involving an adult client, who is receiving care or support services from a service provider, must report that abuse as soon as possible. **Failure to report abuse is an offence.**

Adult clients who experience abuse are not required to report the abuse unless they choose to do so. **A client has two years from the date of the incident to report the abuse.**

Anonymous reports cannot be accepted. The person reporting the abuse must provide their name and contact information. The identity of the complainant will not be disclosed unless:

- the report of abuse is referred to the police or another body for investigation;
- the matter is appealed;
- the PPC office is required to do so by law; or
- under special circumstance

**Under the PPCA, service providers cannot take action against people for reporting abuse, complying with inquiries from a complaints officer, or participating in an investigation.**

## Review of Report of Abuse

Every report of abuse received is reviewed by a complaints officer who decides if an investigation is necessary. The complaints officer may decide to make an inquiry or take other action.

If the report of abuse is investigated, an independent investigator will interview the client, the service provider and any other person who can provide information. The investigator will also review any relevant documents.

After an independent investigation is completed, a report will be submitted to the Director of PPC, which will state whether the abuse was founded or not founded, and may include recommendations.



## Decision of the PPC Director

The PPC Director will:

- review the independent investigators report;
- make a decision on the findings; and
- may direct the service provider or the individual(s) involved to take specific actions to prevent similar abuse from re-occurring.

The PPC Director’s decision may approve or reject the investigator’s recommendations, or take any other action the Director considers appropriate.

In order for the allegation of abuse to be founded, there must be:

- evidence of an act or omission (see Definitions of Abuse) and evidence of serious emotional or serious bodily harm; or
- abuse related to sexual or financial matters.

It is an offence to fail to comply with the Director’s decision.

## Appealing the Director’s Decision

The following persons may appeal the PPC Director’s decision within 15 business days of receiving the decision:

- complainant
- service provider
- client or legal representative
- individual(s) involved or legal representatives.

The appeal panel may confirm, reverse or modify the PPC Director’s decision. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

