



AGING WELL LIVING WELL



News & Information Provided by the Administration on Aging
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Legal Assistance for People 60+



Legal services can be quite expensive—especially if you are on a limited income, as many senior citizens are. However, legal hotlines and legal assistance programs funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging provide free or low-cost legal assistance to older people, many of whom are socially or economically disadvantaged, frail, or at-risk. These legal programs help to ensure that older Americans and their caregivers receive critical information in areas such as consumer protection, public benefits, resident's rights, guardianship, and health and financial advance planning.

Older Americans Act (OAA) legal service providers help with legal problems facing older Americans by offering more than one million hours of assistance a year. There are approximately 1,000 OAA legal services providers nationwide. The program also features community education sessions about legal questions or problems, provides self-help materials, and refers older people to legal aid offices or to pro-bono or reduced-fee private attorneys who specialize in elder rights protection.

The following examples demonstrate some of the benefits of AoA's legal services programs:

- An elderly couple was charged nearly \$11,000 for minor home repairs that were never completed. Legal Services assisted the couple in canceling the contract.
- A 73 year-old woman was contacted by a telemarketer and invited to join a discount buyers club. She told the company she was not interested. However, when her checks began bouncing, she contacted her bank and found that an electronic transfer to the buyers club had been made. Intervention by senior legal services led to a refund of all her money plus additional expenses.

As the nation celebrates Older Americans Month learn more about these and other Older Americans Act programs for older persons and their caregivers by visiting www.aoa.gov Or learn about programs in your community by visiting www.eldercare.gov or calling the Eldercare Locator, between 9 a.m. and 8p.m. EST Monday through Friday, at 1-800-677-1116.