



STATE OF KANSAS  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

**DEREK SCHMIDT**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEMORIAL HALL  
120 SW 10TH AVE., 2ND FLOOR  
TOPEKA, KS 66612-1597  
(785) 296-2215 • FAX (785) 296-6296  
[WWW.AG.KS.GOV](http://WWW.AG.KS.GOV)

March 12, 2021

Hon. Derek Schmidt  
Kansas Attorney General  
120 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Topeka, KS 66612

RE: 2020 Annual Report for the Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Prevention Council

Dear General Schmidt:

I write to you with great pride to provide the annual report of the work, recommendations, and anticipated future activities of the Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Prevention Council. This report covers the time period of July 19, 2019 through December 31, 2020.

### **Council Members and Meetings**

The Council had its inaugural meeting on October 4, 2019, and met 6 additional times, on December 17, 2019, March 13, 2020, June 24, 2020, August 19, 2020, September 14, 2020, and November 30, 2020. The current list of members of the Council, as of December 31, 2020, is as follows:

- Steven Karrer, Chair, Deputy Attorney General, Fraud and Abuse Litigation Division
- Kendra Baldrige, Director of the Bureau of Community Health Systems, KDHE
- Dr. Stephen Benson, Licensed Clinical Psychologist
- Niomi Burget, Consumer Outreach and Public Affairs Coordinator, Attorney General's Office
- Kathryn Carter, Deputy Attorney General, Consumer Protection & Antitrust Division
- Kathy Greenlee, Former Assistant Secretary for Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Mitzi McFatrigh, Executive Director, Kansas Advocates for Better Care
- Vanessa Riebli, Assistant District Attorney, Johnson County District Attorney's Office
- Ruth Ritthaler, Chautauqua County Attorney

- Deb Schwarz, Deputy Director of Prevention and Protection Services, DCF
- Dawne Stevenson, Director of Survey and Certification, KDADS
- Kathy Taylor, Executive Vice President and General Counsel, Kansas Bankers Association
- Mary Tritsch, Associate State Director, AARP
- Jackie Williams, Deputy Attorney General, Medicaid Fraud & Abuse Division
- Jacklyn Zickel, Detective, Overland Park Police Department

It should be noted two original members of the Council, Chrisy Khatib and Ashly Goss , announced their resignation during the reporting period and were replaced by Deb Schwarz and Kendra Baldrige, respectively.

One of the first acts of the Council was to establish three subcommittees addressing three topics; Multidisciplinary Teams, Statutes and Regulations, and Education, Outreach, and Awareness. These subcommittees were formed pursuant to K.A.R. 16-18-3. All of the subcommittees met multiple times throughout the reporting period and were instrumental in the progress of the Council's agenda.

### **Multidisciplinary Teams**

As you are aware, elder and dependent adult investigations often involve multiple agencies. Typically there is both a civil and criminal investigation ongoing at the same time. This requires coordination of the agencies, as well as an understanding of capabilities of each agency. The Council understands communication between agencies is often incomplete. It also understands elder and dependent abuse investigations can be complicated due to the nature of the offense. Often investigations require assistance from experts in fields such as banking, accounting, medicine, cognition, etc. These are often not easy to find especially in local areas. For these reasons, the Council spent much of its time researching and understanding Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT).

The Council and its subcommittees reviewed MDT statutes from several other states. We also reached out to individuals in other states to get their opinion on the advantages and disadvantages of their statute. The goal of the Council is to establish a statute that promotes an MDT approach but allows for flexibility based on local needs and resources. The Council understands there is a vast difference in resources between urban and rural areas. Also, the types of cases are often different. Therefore, an urban MDT may ultimately need to look very different from a rural MDT.

The Council drafted and approved to introduce proposed legislation for the 2021 legislative session. The purpose of the proposed legislation is to create a statewide MDT coordinator located in the Office of the Kansas Attorney General who will facilitate the convening of an MDT in each judicial district in Kansas. These teams would consist of law enforcement, county and district attorneys, and social service agencies. It would also allow for members to be added to the team as needed, such as medical personnel, financial and banking personnel, advocates, and service providers. The purpose of the teams will be to coordinate both civil and criminal investigations of elder and dependent

adult abuse, as well as identifying local opportunities to improve policies and procedures in the notification and response to abuse, neglect, and exploitation, of elder and dependent adults.

### **Effects of COVID-19**

Another issue that received the Council's attention was the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in August of 2020, our meetings went fully remote. Not only did COVID-19 affect the way we met, but it also was a constant source of discussion at our meetings. Members of the Council routinely provided updates on how the pandemic was affecting elder and dependent adults as well as how it was affecting investigations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

### **Looking Forward**

The Council will continue to meet regularly in 2021. Our Statutes and Regulations subcommittee and the MDT subcommittee will be focusing primarily on passing our proposed legislation and if passed, its implementation. Our Outreach and Education subcommittee will be meeting to discuss possible involvement of the Council in World Elder Abuse day in June, as well as continuing to look at other opportunities to provide education and awareness to local communities.

I express my gratitude to you on behalf of all Council Members in allowing us to serve the citizens of Kansas. We look forward in 2021 to continue working with you to prevent the abuse of elder and dependent adults.

Sincerely,

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL  
DEREK SCHMIDT



Steven A. Karrer  
Chair of the Elder and Dependent Adult  
Abuse Prevention Council  
Deputy Attorney General  
Fraud and Abuse Litigation Division