

A. Reporting to Community Assistance/Elder-Links

Any Miami-Dade Fire Rescue employee who encounters a person, whether it is a patient or under other circumstances, and they believe this person could benefit from assistance obtained through the Elder-Links Program or other community service providers should:

1. Complete an Elder-Links/Community Services Referral record through the MDFR intranet at <https://fire-vpcmsapps.fire.miamidade.gov/Elderlink> utilizing the ePCR tablet or the station desktop.

For any questions or concerns please contact the **Community Assistance Elder-Links Office #:** [786-331-4925](tel:786-331-4925) or [786-331-4942](tel:786-331-4942)

B. Reporting Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation of Children or Vulnerable Adults

As defined by Florida Statute 415, any Fire Rescue employee who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect abuse, neglect, self-neglect, vulnerable or exploitation of a child or adult will immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCF) Florida Abuse Hotline. When the above conditions are witnessed by an employee, the following procedures should be applied. You can either report an incident to DCF via telephone or on-line. ***Online reporting should not be used for situations requiring immediate attention. If you suspect or know of a child or vulnerable adult in immediate danger, police must be contacted first.***

When reporting an incident to DCF select one of the following reporting options, either via telephone (option 1) or on-line via the DCF reporting weblink (option 2). Once DCF has been contacted by phone or on-line, you must complete and submit an Elder-Links Referral Record. Please do not forget to indicate on the Elder-Links report how DCF was notified. The State of Florida requires that a report be made by an eyewitness, rather than a third-party caller. DCF needs to be contacted first, then complete and submit the Elder-Links referral record.

OPTION 1: Call the DCF Florida Abuse Hotline for Public Safety Officials **1-866-532-2873** and report the incident. (Do not distribute this phone number to the public). This phone number is linked to the DCF Florida Abuse Hotline 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873). Upon contact with DCF Florida Abuse Hotline counselor, please document the counselor's name and identification number, as it will be needed when completing the Elder-Links Referral record. *(When reporting a case to DCF, calling is the preferred method)*

OPTION 2: Submit a DCF report via their on-line weblink, please gather all of your information in advance. Below is the DCF on-line weblink, once you are on their site select accordingly if the report completed will be for a child or an adult. <https://www.myflfamilies.com/services/abuse/abuse-hotline>

MUST COMPLETE an Elder-Links / Community Services Referral record through the MDFR intranet at <https://fire-vpcmsapps.fire.miamidade.gov/Elderlink> Please include the DCF Florida Abuse Hotline counselor's name and identification number in the Incident Information section of the Elder-Links record. Please be advised that by filling out an Elder-Links referral does not meet the State of Florida Mandated Reporting requirement for reporting abuse or neglect, you must contact DCF.

NOTES: If you are interrupted while filling out the Elder-Links referral record, click **Submit** and your record will be saved. You can access your record later via MDFR intranet at **Top Links > OPS Frequent Links > Elderlinks>Display > Submitted** > locate the **Patient Name** record and click the **Edit** button. Complete your Elder-Links record and click **Update Record** button. The updated information will be saved and submitted.

DO NOT fax records to the Florida DCF Abuse Hotline, as there is no guaranteed process to know that it has been received.

C. Additional Information

1. If the abused, neglected, self-neglected or exploited person is in immediate need of medical assistance and access to the patient is denied by a person or people on the scene, the Unit OIC will request police to respond for assistance.
2. In situations where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a criminal violation involving an incident of second party abuse or neglect has been attempted or committed, the Unit OIC will request police to respond to initiate an investigation.
3. Response by a law enforcement agency to the incident scene or transportation to a hospital does not release the Unit OIC from the responsibility of reporting the incident to Florida DCF via their Abuse Hotline or On-line weblink.