



# ELDER ABUSE TASK FORCE

Thank you for your interest in Michigan's Elder Abuse Task Force – an alliance representing more than 50 different organizations in the public, private and non-profit sectors – all working together to reduce barriers facing our aging population.

This newsletter is a brief update on the task force and its efforts since it was launched earlier this year.



## CASES

Since the launch of the Elder Abuse Task Force, the Attorney General has filed nine elder abuse cases in [Delta](#), [Kent](#), [Macomb](#), [Manistee](#), and [Shiawassee](#) counties; and [twice](#) in [Saginaw](#) county. The Department has also intervened in [two probate cases](#) in [Macomb](#) and [St. Clair](#) counties.

## INITIATIVES UPDATE

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, the Michigan State Police, the Michigan Sheriffs' Association, the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, and Midland, Isabella and Kalamazoo County Prosecutors recently announced the voluntary statewide implementation of the [standard investigation form for vulnerable adult abuse](#) to aid law enforcement in conducting such investigations more efficiently. While a form has not been mandated by the state, law enforcement collectively agreed this implementation was necessary statewide to truly combat the abuse of our most vulnerable residents. The use of this form and training modules will be rolled out officially by Nov. 1.

Attorney General Nessel, the Michigan Supreme Court and the entire Elder Abuse Task Force are proud to place a check in the box of one of its initial nine initiatives and are moving full speed ahead to accomplish the rest.

The Task Force has developed a legislative package addressing many of the key task force initiatives, which includes the following statutory changes:

- Professional guardians would need to be certified by the National Guardian Association. This certification requires training, a background check, adherence to a code of ethics, bonding, and continuing education.
- The guardian would be required to file an accounting form whenever the guardian manages property of the ward.
- A family rights form would be available to explain the rights available to interested parties in guardianship and conservatorship proceedings.
- A guardian would not be allowed to prevent visitation with a ward without providing an affidavit with an explanation. The individual blocked from visitation would also have the right to a hearing.
- "Emergency" petitions for guardians would be limited to situations that pose a danger of "imminent and substantial harm."
- A ward could not be removed from his or her home in a non-emergency situation unless a petition was filed with the court explaining why there was no other viable option available to protect the ward, with a right to a hearing.



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## LISTENING TOUR AND TOWN HALLS

Since June, the [Elder Abuse Listening Tour](#) made a total of 12 stops in Bay, Berrien, Genesee, Grand Traverse, Isabella, Kalamazoo, Kent, Marquette, Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties. Special guests along the way included probate judges, county prosecutors, community organizations, and members of the Legislature.

Attorney General Nessel and Supreme Court Justices Megan Cavanagh and Richard Bernstein traveled more than 2,600 miles, heard from more than 200 seniors and advocates with nearly 1,000 in attendance across the tour. More than 10,000 people tuned in online via Facebook Live.

Throughout the tour, the testimony received was invaluable. The three top concerns shared by seniors and advocates alike included:

- Full-time and court-appointed guardianships;
- Selling the personal property of a senior who has been declared a ward of the court; and
- Isolation from their families.

To continue to bring awareness to the often unrecognized and unreported instances of elder abuse in our state, AG Nessel has agreed to be the guest speaker at several [Elder Abuse town halls](#) hosted by legislators in October and November.

## COURT WATCHERS

We appreciate the abundance of interest in the Court Watchers program. The curriculum development is currently underway along with an easily accessible training component.

For all who provided their email addresses at the elder abuse listening tour stops and/or town halls, further email communication will follow with details on the application process, requirements and training.

If you would still like to express your interest, we welcome you to do so by [entering your email on the Department of Attorney General’s website](#).



## STAY CONNECTED

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel and the Elder Abuse Task Force thank you for your continued support in combatting elder abuse.

Please [visit the elder abuse page](#) for information, [subscribe here for updates](#) from the task force and [sign up here](#) to express your interest in the “Court Watchers” program.

**For Questions:**  
**800-24-ABUSE (22873)**  
[mi.gov/elderabuse](http://mi.gov/elderabuse)



**To Report:**  
**855-444-3911**  
[mi.gov/protectiveservices](http://mi.gov/protectiveservices)