



## The Growing Concern of Elder Abuse

**P**ublic human services departments with adult protective services responsibilities are taking note: According to the U.S. Census Bureau, “the population age 65 is expected to more than double between 2012 and 2060, from 43.1 million to 92 million. The older population would represent just over one in five U.S. residents by the end of the period, up from one in seven today. The increase in the number of ‘oldest old’ would be even more dramatic—those 85 and older are projected to more than triple from 5.9 million to 18.2 million, reaching 4.3 percent of the total population.”<sup>1</sup> By 2040, one out of every five Americans will be 65 or older.<sup>2</sup>



### Recent Elder Abuse Statistics

Number of elder abuse (defined as age 60+) cases in 2010	5,961,568
Percent of elderly population abused in 2010	9.5%
Median age of elder abuse victims	77.9

### Demographics of Elder Abuse Victims

Percent of female elder abuse victims	67.3%
Percent of male elder abuse victims	32.7%
Percent of White victims	66.4%
Percent of Black victims	18.7%
Percent of Hispanic victims	10.4%

### Types of Reported Elder Abuse Cases

Neglect	58.5%
Physical Abuse	15.7%
Financial Exploitation	12.3%
Emotional Abuse	7.3%
Sexual Abuse	0.04%
All other types	5.1%
Unknown	0.06%

### Family-Perpetrated Elder Abuse

Percent of Adult Protective Service cases that involve elder abuse	68%
Percent of elder abuse perpetrated by adult children or spouses	66%
Percent of murder victims over 60 who were killed by their own offspring	42%
Percent of murder victims over 60 who were killed by their spouses	24%

### Nursing Home Abuse

Percent of nursing homes that lack adequate staff to properly care for patients	91%
Percent of nursing homes that have been in violation of elder abuse laws	36%

Most elderly adults with physical or mental disabilities are able to live comfortably and securely. Either with assistance from relatives, friends, neighbors, or professionals, even those elderly adults with physical or mental disabilities are able to live independently. For some, however, dependence on someone else may result in abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Elder abuse can take many forms:

- ◆ Physical: hitting, pushing, shoving, slapping, shaking, improper restraining
- ◆ Psychological: threatening, intimidating, humiliating, depriving
- ◆ Neglect: failing to provide needed medical or physical care
- ◆ Financial: stealing or other fraudulent behavior
- ◆ Sexual: unwanted sexual activity
- ◆ Discrimination: based on age, disability, gender, race, religion, cultural background or sexual orientation
- ◆ Withholding information: especially about rights or entitlements

The goal of elder protective services is to strike a balance between respecting the rights of each older person, while also being in a position to take action when necessary to support and to protect them. Are there enough adult protective services workers to do the job? As the average age of the American population continues to rise and the percentage of Americans aged 65+ grows exponentially (having tripled since the early 1990s), elder abuse is quickly becoming a national epidemic. From a legal, policy, and practice perspective—ready or not—here it comes. 

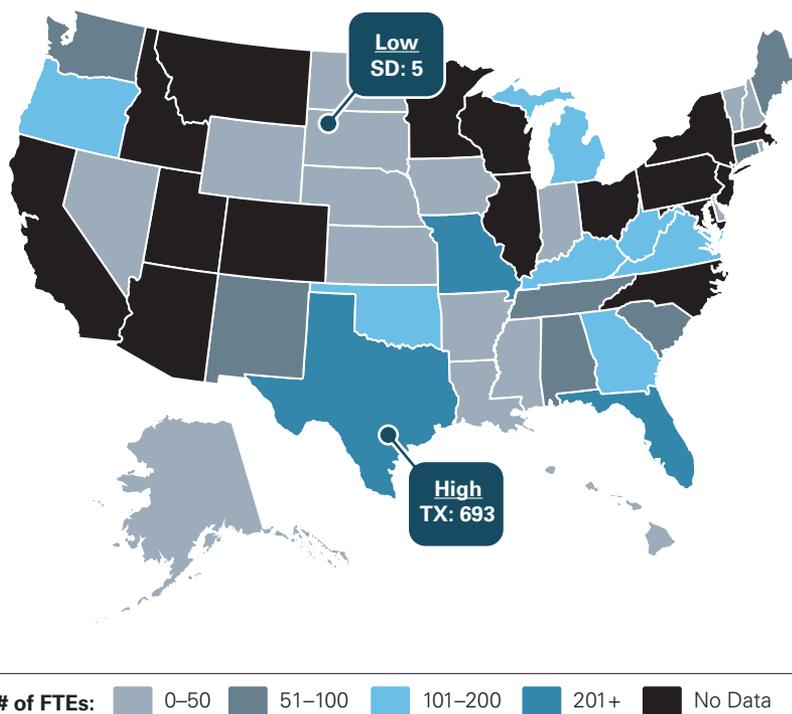
**Daniel Pollack** is a professor at Yeshiva University's Wurzweiler School of Social Work in New York City. He can be reached at [dpollack@yu.edu](mailto:dpollack@yu.edu).

#### Reference Notes

1. Retrieved February 28, 2013. [www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-243.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-243.html).
2. [www.urban.org/retirement\\_policy/agingpopulation.cfm](http://www.urban.org/retirement_policy/agingpopulation.cfm)

## FTE Numbers Across the United States

According to Andrew Capehart, assistant director of the National Adult Protective Services Association, in a recent comprehensive survey 34 states responded indicating a total of 3,338 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees.



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