

# When Elder Abuse Involves the Police

Calling the police is an important way for the abused older adult to be protected and one way to prevent future occurrences.

## Making a Criminal Complaint

The police may proceed as follows:

- > investigate the complaint
- > interview the abused person and possibly family members, caregivers, and neighbours who have evidence about the incident
- > may also interview the alleged abuser
- > gather evidence that is relevant to the complaint
- > may lay charges against the alleged abuser

*Even if not for a criminal matter, the police can be very helpful in connecting seniors to various supports in the community—making referrals to other agencies as needed.*

## Victims' Services

- > provide information
- > offer practical assistance
- > extend emotional support
- > help communicate the victim's needs and concerns to the police or Crown Counsel

## Laying charges

- > After the statement is completed, police will investigate the complaint.
- > If deemed a crime, police prepare a "Report to Crown Counsel" (RTCC).
- > Crown counsel reviews RTCC and decides whether to charge the accused with a crime.
- > With sufficient evidence, an information will be laid and the police will arrest the suspected offender.

## The Accused

When an accused is arrested, the police will either

- > keep that person in custody
- or
- > let the person go on bail

## The Process

Three types of criminal offences:

- > summary offences
  - > indictable offences
- and
- > a hybrid of summary and indictable offences

### *Summary Offences*

These kinds of offences can be tried only in Provincial Court and include most minor offences in the *Criminal Code*, for example, harassing telephone calls.

### *Indictable Offences*

These kinds of offences carry more severe penalties than summary offences. Examples include murder, manslaughter, and aggravated assault.

### *Summary or Indictable (“Hybrid”) Offences*

For these offences, the Crown will choose whether the offence is tried summarily or on indictment.

- > If the Crown proceeds by way of indictment, the accused can then elect the mode of trial (jury or judge), as in the indictable option above.

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#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON ALBERTA LAW

- > More information about abuse of older adults, including links to related websites, can be found on Oak-Net at [www.oaknet.ca/abuse](http://www.oaknet.ca/abuse)
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