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Brooke E. Lierman
COMPTROLLER OF MARYLAND



News Release

Maryland Officials and Non-Profits Unite to Combat Elder Financial Abuse During PROTECT Week 2023

*One in 10 Americans aged 60 and over have experienced
some form of elder abuse*

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (June 13, 2023) - The Comptroller of Maryland, AARP Maryland, the Maryland Attorney General, Maryland Department of Aging, Maryland Department of Human Services, Office of Financial Regulation in the Maryland Department of Labor, and the U.S. Attorney's Office — along with a coalition of federal, local government, business and consumer groups — have kicked off PROTECT Week, a statewide awareness and education campaign targeting elder abuse and financial exploitation. PROTECT Week is an annual initiative anchored around World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, June 15. (For a complete schedule of virtual and in-person events, including free document shreds, visit www.aarp.org/md).

“Every year, thousands of older adults fall victim to financial exploitation and the consequences can be severe,” **Comptroller Brooke Lierman said.** “Our office proudly joins the many partners involved in PROTECT Week 2023 to provide Marylanders information and tools to help identify and avoid scams, so they are both fully aware of the risks and know how to avoid them.”

“Elder abuse and financial exploitation are serious problems in our state, and we must do everything we can to prevent them,” said AARP Maryland State Director Hank Greenberg. “PROTECT Week is a great opportunity for Marylanders to learn more about these issues and what they can do to help keep their loved ones safe.” According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, one in 10 Americans aged 60 and over have experienced some form of elder abuse— and financial exploitation is the most common type. Elder abuse can take many forms, including physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse, as well as neglect.

“Our older Marylanders have dedicated their lives to raising families, building our communities, and growing our economy. They deserve to live with dignity and without fear of exploitation and abuse,” said Attorney General Anthony Brown. “These heartbreaking

abuses can occur at the hands of trusted friends and family, as well as complete strangers. The best protection is information, which is why PROTECT Week is so important. My office provides resources to help seniors and vulnerable adults avoid scams and fraud, and to pursue asset recovery on behalf of those who have been exploited.”

“Our team is committed to promoting the safety, stability and independence of seniors in our communities,” said Maryland Department of Human Services Secretary Rafael López. “We need your help. Each financial exploitation case we open starts with a report from someone who is concerned. We do not know there’s a problem unless you say something. So, if you suspect someone is being abused, neglected or exploited in any way, take action. Please call 1-800-91Prevent (1-800-917-7383).”

“The Maryland Department of Aging is committed to the safety and well-being of older Marylanders and supports efforts across multiple sectors and state agencies to achieve that end. Our goal is to provide protections for older people, including teaching them how to protect themselves,” said Maryland Department of Aging Secretary Carmel Roques, who presented a proclamation from Governor Moore in recognition of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

“As Maryland's consumer financial protection agency, my office is proud to be a part of Protect Week to bring attention to the dangers of senior financial exploitation,” said Commissioner of Financial Regulation Tony Salazar. “Fraud can happen to anyone - we encourage older adults and their loved ones to learn how to protect themselves and to not be afraid to report incidents of financial abuse.”

“People do not 'lose' money to scammers,” reminded AARP Executive Council Member Karen Morgan. “Their money is stolen, by criminals who use emotional manipulation as a weapon.”

For list of PROTECT Week coalition members and to register for events, visit: www.aarp.org/md.

PROTECT WEEK EVENTS:

Teletown Hall:

Noon to 1 p.m. Thursday, June 15

Online at www.vekeo.com/aarpmaryland.

Join AARP Maryland from for a live telephone town hall conversation with United States Attorney Erek Barron, Maryland Comptroller Brooke Lierman, Karen Straughn, Director of the Consumer Protection Division’s Mediation Unit, Office of the Attorney General and AARP Maryland executive council member, Karen Morgan.

Free Shred Events:

All events are FREE. Limit two boxes per car. Household waste only, no businesses. Registration required

Thursday, June 15, 9 a.m. to noon

Washington County Commission on Aging 535 East Franklin St., Hagerstown, MD Register: <https://events.aarp.org/d/s0q2xj/> Camp Springs

Friday, June 16, 1 to 4 p.m.

Camp Springs Senior Activity Center 6420 Allentown Rd., Camp Springs, MD 20748 Register: <https://events.aarp.org/d/p0q2xk/> Frederick

Saturday, June 17, 1 to 4 p.m.

Monocacy Park 401 Delaware Rd. Frederick, MD 21701 Register: <https://events.aarp.org/d/50q2x0/> Parkville

Wednesday, June 21, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Parkville Senior Center 8601 Harford Rd., Parkville, MD Register: <https://events.aarp.org/d/b0q2xz/>

Saturday, June 24, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch 11107 Cathell Rd., Berlin, MD Register: <https://events.aarp.org/d/q0q2xw/>

Webinars and Virtual Events

Join AARP Maryland to discuss the most prominent scams and the resources available to you to prevent them at 1:30 p.m. ET through June 16, on **AARP Facebook.com/aarpmid** or **YouTube.com/aarpmaryland**.

Tuesday, June 13 -- Door to Door and In-person Scams with Ted Meyerson and Sean Petty, Montgomery County Police.

Wednesday, June 14 -- When Caring Hurts- Benefits Exploitation by Providers with Karen Morgan and BC REST, Lynn McCamie.

Thursday, June 15 -- Cryptocurrency Scams with AARP Maryland Ted Meyerson and Steven Dougherty, United States Secret Service.

Friday, June 16 -- Peer-to-Peer Payment Apps with Karen Morgan and Tony Salazar, Commissioner of Financial Regulation.

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