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TO: JAMES A. ROTHROCK, Commissioner
Virginia Department of Social Services

FROM: MICHELLE A. L'HOMMEDIEU 
Assistant Attorney General

DATE: July 19, 2017

SUBJECT: Exempt Final Regulation – Amend APS Regulations to reflect legislative changes, 22 VAC 30-100-10 *et seq.* (4858/7982)

I am in receipt of the attached regulation to amend the adult protective services (APS) regulations 22 VAC 30-100-10 *et seq.* You have asked the Office of the Attorney General to review and determine if the DARS Commissioner has the statutory authority to promulgate the proposed regulations and if the proposed regulations comport with applicable state law.

Virginia Code § 51.5-131 mandates that the Commissioner promulgate regulations that are necessary to carry out the provisions of the laws of the Commonwealth administered by DARS. The current regulations for the administration of APS are set forth at 22 VAC 30-100-10 *et seq.* The proposed amendments to these regulations are necessary to reflect the changes to Virginia Code by the adoption of Chapter 195 of the 2017 Acts of Assembly. Additional amendment is proposed to address technical errors in the current regulations.

Based on my review, it is my view that the DARS Commissioner has the authority to promulgate the final regulations, subject to compliance with the provisions of Article 2 of the Administrative Process Act (“APA”) and Executive Order 17 (2014), and has not exceeded that authority. The Agency Background Document available on Town Hall reflects the Commissioner’s approval of these regulatory amendments on June 15, 2017. Based on the foregoing, it is my view that the amendments to these regulations are exempt from the procedures of Article 2 of the APA under Virginia Code §§ 2.2-4006(A)(3) and 2.2-4006(A)(4)(a). If you have any questions or need additional information about this regulation, please contact me at 786-6005.

cc: Kim F. Piner, Esq.
Attachment

Project 5143 - Final

DEPARTMENT FOR AGING AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

Amend APS Regulations to comport with legislation passed during the 2017 General Assembly Session

22VAC30-100-10. Definitions.

The following words and terms when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Abuse" means the willful infliction of physical pain, injury or mental anguish or unreasonable confinement of an adult as defined in § 63.2-1603.

"Adult" means any person in the Commonwealth who is abused, neglected, or exploited, or is at risk of being abused, neglected, or exploited; and is 18 years of age or older and incapacitated, or is 60 years of age and older.

~~"Adult protective services" means the receipt, investigation and disposition of complaints and reports of adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults 18 years of age and over who are incapacitated and adults 60 years of age and over by the local department of social services. Adult protective services also include the provision of casework and care management by the local department in order to stabilize the situation or to prevent further abuse, neglect, and exploitation of an adult at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation. If appropriate and available, adult protective services may include the direct provision of services by the local department or arranging for home based care, transportation, adult day services, meal service, legal proceedings, alternative placements and other activities to protect the adult and restore self-sufficiency to the extent possible services provided by the local department that are necessary to protect an adult as defined in § 63.2-1603 from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.~~

"Collateral" means a person whose personal or professional knowledge may help confirm or rebut the allegations of adult abuse, neglect or exploitation or whose involvement may help ensure the safety of the adult.

"Commissioner" means the commissioner of the department.

"Conservator" means a person appointed by the court who is responsible for managing the estate and financial affairs of an incapacitated person, and where the context plainly indicates, includes a "limited conservator" or a "temporary conservator."

"Department" means the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services.

"Director" means the director or his delegated representative of the department of social services of the city or county in which the adult resides or is found.

"Disposition" means the determination of whether or not adult abuse, neglect or exploitation has occurred.

"Documentation" means information and materials, written or otherwise, concerning allegations, facts and evidence.

"Exploitation" means the illegal, unauthorized, improper, or fraudulent use of an incapacitated adult as defined in § 63.2-1603 or his funds, property, benefits, resources, or other assets for another's profit, benefit, or advantage, including a caregiver or person serving in a fiduciary capacity, or that deprives the adult of his rightful use of or access to such funds, property, benefits, resources, or other assets. "Adult exploitation" includes (i) an intentional breach of a fiduciary obligation to an adult to his detriment or an intentional failure to use the financial resources of an adult in a manner that results in neglect of such adult; (ii) the acquisition, possession, or control of an adult's financial resources or property through the use of undue influence, coercion, or duress; and (iii) forcing or coercing an adult to pay for goods or

services or perform services against his will for another's profit, benefit, or advantage if the adult did not agree, or was tricked, misled, or defrauded into agreeing, to pay for such goods or services or perform such services. This includes ~~acquiring an adult's resources through the use of the adult's mental or physical incapacity, the disposition of the incapacitated adult's property by a second party to the advantage of the second party and to the detriment of the incapacitated adult, misuse of funds, acquiring an advantage through threats to withhold needed support or care unless certain conditions are met, or persuading an incapacitated adult to perform services including sexual acts to which the adult lacks the capacity to consent.~~

"Guardian" means a person who has been legally invested with the authority and charged with the duty of taking care of the person and managing his property and protecting the rights of the person who has been declared by the circuit court to be incapacitated and incapable of administering his own affairs. The powers and duties of the guardian are defined by the court and are limited to matters within the areas where the person in need of a guardian has been determined to be incapacitated.

"Guardian ad litem" means an attorney appointed by the court to represent the interest of the adult for whom a guardian or conservator is requested. On the hearing of the petition for appointment of a guardian or conservator, the guardian ad litem advocates for the adult who is the subject of the hearing, and his duties are usually concluded when the case is decided.

"Incapacitated person" means any adult who is impaired by reason of mental illness, intellectual disability, physical illness or disability, advanced age or other causes to the extent that the adult lacks sufficient understanding or capacity to make, communicate or carry out reasonable decisions concerning his or her well-being. This definition is for the purpose of establishing an adult's eligibility for adult protective services and such adult may or may not have been found incapacitated through court procedures.

"Involuntary protective services" means those services authorized by the court for an adult who has been determined to need protective services and who has been adjudicated incapacitated and lacking the capacity to consent to receive the needed protective services.

"Lacks capacity to consent" means a preliminary judgment of a local department of social services social worker that an adult is unable to consent to receive needed services for reasons that relate to emotional or psychiatric problems, intellectual disability, developmental delay, or other reasons which impair the adult's ability to recognize a substantial risk of death or immediate and serious harm to himself. The lack of capacity to consent may be either permanent or temporary. The worker must make a preliminary judgment that the adult lacks capacity to consent before petitioning the court for authorization to provide protective services on an emergency basis pursuant to § 63.2-1609 of the Code of Virginia.

"Legally incapacitated" means that the person has been adjudicated incapacitated by a circuit court because of a mental or physical condition which renders him, either wholly or partially, incapable of taking care of himself or his estate.

"Legally incompetent" means a person who has been adjudicated incompetent by a circuit court because of a mental condition which renders him incapable of taking care of his person or managing his estate.

"Legitimate interest" means a lawful, demonstrated privilege to access the information as defined in § 63.2-104 of the Code of Virginia.

"Local department" means any local department of social services in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

"Mandated reporters" means those persons who are required to report pursuant to § 63.2-1606 of the Code of Virginia when such persons have reason to suspect that an adult is abused, neglected, or exploited or is at risk of adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

"Mental anguish" means a state of emotional pain or distress resulting from activity (verbal or behavioral) of a perpetrator. The intent of the activity is to threaten or intimidate, cause sorrow or fear, humiliate, change behavior or ridicule. There must be evidence that it is the perpetrator's activity that has caused the adult's feelings of pain or distress.

"Neglect" means that an adult as defined in § 63.2-1603 is living under such circumstances that he is not able to provide for himself or is not being provided such services as are necessary to maintain his physical and mental health and that the failure to receive such necessary services impairs or threatens to impair his well-being. However, no adult shall be considered neglected solely on the basis that such adult is receiving religious nonmedical treatment or religious nonmedical nursing care in lieu of medical care, provided that such treatment or care is performed in good faith and in accordance with the religious practices of the adult and there is written or oral expression of consent by that adult. Neglect includes the failure of a caregiver or another responsible person to provide for basic needs to maintain the adult's physical and mental health and well-being, and it includes the adult's neglect of self. Neglect includes, but is not limited to:

1. The lack of clothing considered necessary to protect a person's health;
2. The lack of food necessary to prevent physical injury or to maintain life, including failure to receive appropriate food for adults with conditions requiring special diets;
3. Shelter that is not structurally safe; has rodents or other infestations which may result in serious health problems; or does not have a safe and accessible water supply, safe heat source or sewage disposal. Adequate shelter for an adult will depend on the impairments of an adult; however, the adult must be protected from the elements that would seriously endanger his health (e.g., rain, cold or heat) and could result in serious illness or debilitating conditions;
4. Inadequate supervision by a caregiver (paid or unpaid) who has been designated to provide the supervision necessary to protect the safety and well-being of an adult in his care;
5. The failure of persons who are responsible for caregiving to seek needed medical care or to follow medically prescribed treatment for an adult, or the adult has failed to obtain such care for himself. The needed medical care is believed to be of such a nature as to result in physical and/or mental injury or illness if it is not provided;
6. Medical neglect includes, but is not limited to, the withholding of medication or aids needed by the adult such as dentures, eye glasses, hearing aids, walker, etc. It also includes the unauthorized administration of prescription drugs, over-medicating or under-medicating, and the administration of drugs for other than bona fide medical reasons, as determined by a licensed health care professional; and
7. Self-neglect by an adult who is not meeting his own basic needs due to mental and/or physical impairments. Basic needs refer to such things as food, clothing, shelter, health or medical care.

"Notification" means informing designated and appropriate individuals of the local department's action and the individual's rights.

"Preponderance of evidence" means the evidence as a whole shows that the facts are more probable and credible than not. It is evidence that is of greater weight or more convincing than the evidence offered in opposition.

"Report" means an allegation by any person that an adult is in need of protective services. The term "report" shall refer to both reports and complaints of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults. The report may be made orally or in writing to the local department or by calling the Adult Protective Services Hotline.

"Service plan" means a plan of action to address the service needs of an adult in order to protect the adult, to prevent future abuse, neglect or exploitation, and to preserve the autonomy of the adult whenever possible.

"Unreasonable confinement" means the use of restraints (physical or chemical), isolation, or any other means of confinement without medical orders, when there is no emergency and for reasons other than the adult's safety or well-being or the safety of others.

"Valid report" means the local department of social services has evaluated the information and allegations of the report and determined that the local department shall conduct an investigation because all of the following elements are present:

1. The alleged victim adult is 60 years of age or older or is 18 years of age or older and is incapacitated;
2. There is a specific adult with enough identifying information to locate the adult;
3. Circumstances allege abuse, neglect or exploitation or risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation; and
4. The local department receiving the report is a local department of jurisdiction as described in 22VAC30-100-20.

"Voluntary protective services" means those services provided to an adult who, after investigation by a local department, is determined to be in need of protective services and consents to receiving the services so as to prevent further abuse, neglect, and exploitation of an adult at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Statutory Authority

§ 51.5-131 of the Code of Virginia; 42 USC § 1397(3).

Historical Notes

Former 22VAC40-740-10, derived from VR615-46-01 § 1.1, eff. December 6, 1989; amended, Virginia Register Volume 20, Issue 20, eff. August 1, 2004; Volume 23, Issue 10, eff. March 1, 2007; Volume 25, Issue 23, eff. September 1, 2009; Volume 28, Issue 23, eff. August 15, 2012; amended and renumbered as 22VAC30-100-10, Virginia Register Volume 30, Issue 1, eff. October 9, 2013.

22VAC30-100-50. Disclosure of adult protective services information.

A. This chapter describes the protection of confidential information including a description of when such information must be disclosed, when such disclosure of the information is at the discretion of the local department, what information may be disclosed, and the procedure for disclosing the information.

B. Department staff having legitimate interest shall have regular access to adult protective services records maintained by the local department.

C. The following agencies have licensing, regulatory and legal authority for administrative action or criminal investigations, and they have a legitimate interest in confidential information when such information is relevant and reasonably necessary for the fulfillment of their licensing, regulatory and legal responsibilities:

1. Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services;
2. ~~Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy;~~ disAbility Law Center of Virginia;
3. Office of the Attorney General, including the Medicaid Fraud Control Program;
4. Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services;
5. Department of Health, including the ~~Center for Quality Health Care Services and Consumer Protection~~ Office of Licensure and Certification and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner;

6. Department of Medical Assistance Services;
7. Department of Health Professions;
8. Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired;
9. Department of Social Services, including the Division of Licensing Programs;
10. The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman and local ombudsman;
11. Law-enforcement agencies;
12. Medical examiners;
13. Adult fatality review teams;
14. Prosecutors; and
15. Any other entity deemed appropriate by the commissioner or local department director that demonstrates a legitimate interest.

D. The local department shall disclose all relevant information to representatives of the agencies identified in subsection C of this section except the identity of the person who reported the abuse, neglect or exploitation unless the reporter authorizes the disclosure of his identity or the disclosure is ordered by the court.

E. The local department shall refer any appropriate matter and all relevant documentation to the appropriate licensing, regulatory or legal authority for administrative action or criminal investigation.

F. Local departments may release information to the following persons when the local department has determined the person making the request has legitimate interest in accordance with § 63.2-104 of the Code of Virginia and the release of information is in the best interest of the adult:

1. Representatives of public and private agencies including community services boards, area agencies on aging and local health departments requesting disclosure when the agency has legitimate interest;
2. A physician who is treating an adult whom he reasonably suspects is abused, neglected or exploited;
3. The adult's legally appointed guardian or conservator;
4. A guardian ad litem who has been appointed for an adult who is the subject of an adult protective services report;
5. A family member who is responsible for the welfare of an adult who is the subject of an adult protective services report;
6. An attorney representing a local department in an adult protective services case;
7. The Social Security Administration; or
8. Any other entity that demonstrates to the commissioner or local department director that legitimate interest is evident.

G. Local departments are required to disclose information under the following circumstances:

1. When disclosure is ordered by a court;
2. When a person has made an adult protective services report and an investigation has been completed; or
3. When a request for access to information is made pursuant to the Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act (§ 2.2-3800 et seq. of the Code of Virginia).

H. Any or all of the following specific information may be disclosed at the discretion of the local department to agencies or persons specified in subsection F of this section:

1. Name, address, age, race, and gender of the adult who is the subject of the request for information;
2. Name, address, age, race, and gender of the person who is alleged to have perpetrated the abuse, neglect, or exploitation;
3. Description of the incident or incidents of abuse, neglect, or exploitation;
4. Description of medical problems to the extent known;
5. Disposition of the adult protective services report; and
6. The protective service needs of the adult.

I. The identity of the person who reported the suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation shall be held confidential unless the reporter authorizes the disclosure of his identity or disclosure is ordered by the court.

J. Agencies or persons who receive confidential information pursuant to subsection G of this section shall provide the following assurances to the local department:

1. The purpose for which information is requested is related to the protective services goal in the service plan for the adult;
2. The information will be used only for the purpose for which it is made available; and
3. The information will be held confidential by the department or individual receiving the information except to the extent that disclosure is required by law.

K. Methods of obtaining assurances. Any one of the following methods may be used to obtain assurances required in subsection J of this section:

1. Agreements between local departments and other community service agencies that provide blanket assurances required in subsection J of this section for all adult protective services cases; or
2. State-level agreements that provide blanket assurances required in subsection C of this section for all adult protective services cases.

L. Notification that information has been disclosed. When information has been disclosed pursuant to this chapter, notice of the disclosure shall be given to the adult who is the subject of the information or to his legally appointed guardian. If the adult has given permission to release the information, further notification shall not be required.

Statutory Authority

§ 51.5-131 of the Code of Virginia; 42 USC § 1397(3).

Historical Notes

Former 22VAC40-740-50, derived from VR615-46-01 § 2.4, eff. December 6, 1989; amended, Virginia Register Volume 20, Issue 20, eff. August 1, 2004; Volume 23, Issue 10, eff. March 1, 2007; Volume 25, Issue 23, eff. September 1, 2009; Volume 28, Issue 23, eff. August 15, 2012; renumbered as 22VAC30-100-50, Virginia Register Volume 30, Issue 1, eff. October 9, 2013.