

Adult Protective Services Proposal

The Council requested staff to research conducting a survey of people involved with investigations by Adult Protective Services to determine recommendations for investigation protocols and protective measures resulting from investigations. However, information collected revealed two major issues with a survey of this nature. There are problems with identifying and accessing individuals involved in these investigations and due to the nature of investigations there are concerns over anticipated results and the ability to interpret survey responses. (see below)

Discussions with Council members revealed that the overall goal for this initiative was to determine potential recommendations in the protocols and practices of Adult Protective Services' investigations. To achieve this goal it is recommended that instead of broadcast surveys to many people that the information be gathered from structured, detailed interviews with a few individuals (between 5-8) who had been involved in Adult Protective Services' investigations and a couple of investigators. These interviews will seek information on what major policy areas and specific protocols to review for recommended changes. While it would be recommended to select individuals for interviews based on a range of characteristics including, but not limited to, their ability to communicate, living arrangements, type of investigation, and outcome, it is anticipated that identifying these individuals could pose challenges.

Projected cost: \$15,000

Potential Issues with conducting a survey of people involved in investigations

1. Survey subjects. Most investigations involve the person reporting the complaint (reporter), the person alleged to have been victimized (alleged victim), the person alleged to be responsible for the abuse (alleged perpetrator), employer of alleged perpetrator, family members of alleged victim, and any potential witnesses to alleged abuse.
2. Restriction to personal information. The Office of Aging and Adult Services is restricted from releasing personal information of any of these individuals or their role in the investigation. This creates potential difficulties with utilizing a neutral third party to conduct a survey.
3. Interpreting results. Surveying individuals involved in situations with serious ramifications creates a number of biases depending on the nature of the person's involvement and the outcome. It is estimated that approximately half of all respondents would not be satisfied with the procedures and/or outcomes. Additional complications would arise from feelings individuals have who have experienced abuse toward their abuser and potential life changing results of protective measures.
4. Satisfaction vs. Protection. Respondents' indication of satisfaction may be in conflict with the goal of protective services investigations (i.e., ensuring that the investigation produces an accurate assessment of the situation and the outcome is a balance between safety and protection for alleged victims and the protection of rights of all involved).