



Documentation Considerations

Initial Response to the Report

Elements of Concern	What to Document	How to Document
Another agency, such as DMH or LTC, will investigate the report.	What agency is more appropriate to investigate, or what criteria were unmet?	Where the report or reporter was referred to receive the proper assistance.
Inadequate information to contact or locate the eligible adult.	Inability to find adequate contact information and attempts to locate.	That information is unavailable and could not be obtained from family or another source who knows the eligible adult's whereabouts.
The eligible adult has moved out of state or out of the country.	Where the eligible adult has moved.	The state hotline or number that the reporter was referred to.
The eligible adult is deceased.	Source of the information, and there is no indication that another eligible adult is at risk.	Date of death, known circumstances, and collateral verification of death. Confirmation that no other eligible adult exists.
The report is of a past occurrence that has already been investigated, and there are no new allegations or risks to the eligible adult.	Confirmation that risks and allegations have not changed.	The date of the past occurrence and documentation of information obtained show no risks to the eligible adult or additional allegations that haven't been investigated.
Contacting the reporter.	Confirmation of reported information. Additional information is in a separate note.	Document that information was verified with the reporter. New information obtained from the reporter or additional contact should be in a separate case note. Note: If the EA is the reporter, a 'verification of the report' note is still required to protect the reporter's identity.
Assuring Eligibility of Reported Adult.	The eligible adult meets the statutory requirements for DSDS to investigate.	Documentation that the eligible adult cannot protect their interests is supported by verifiable facts for reasons such as confusion, mental illness, or other factors. Documentation that the eligible adult cannot adequately perform or obtain services necessary to meet their essential human needs is supported by verifiable facts such as a physical/mental illness or other impairment.



Documentation Considerations

Investigative Actions

What is being addressed	What to Document	How to Document
Interview the eligible adult in private unless they request otherwise.	Obtain consent to enter the residence if interviewing the eligible adult at home and approval to speak privately. Observable behaviors and living environment.	Document the date, time, who was present, who left the room, and the eligible adult's statement and willingness/ability to cooperate with the investigation. Quote relevant statements, especially when made spontaneously and under strong emotion. Include any pertinent documents or evidence.
Observations during eligible adult interviews.	Descriptions of the eligible adult and their environment, e.g., any filth, pests, or hazards. Descriptions of any physical evidence. Descriptions of any behaviors the eligible adult is exhibiting. Descriptions of safety issues/concerns	Document any issues and environmental concerns present or lack thereof. e.g., adequate living quarters, an abundance of pets, pests, etc. Document any visual or physical evidence or indicators of allegations. Document any concerns with the eligible adult's safety. Document any unusual behaviors the eligible adult exhibits or any psychological issues. Document details of photos taken or obtained and the source of information.
Interview others knowledgeable about the allegations, including other agencies/professionals involved in the investigation.	Summarize the statements made by collateral contacts relevant to the allegations being investigated.	Document the date, time, relationship to the eligible adult, full name, contact information, role/position, and relevant statements. Include any pertinent documents for evidence.
Interview the alleged perpetrator if available and if appropriate.	Summarize the alleged perpetrator's statement.	Document the date, time, who was present, relationship to the eligible adult, full name, contact information, role/position, any consistencies/inconsistencies, and explanation of the events. Quote relevant statements, especially when made spontaneously and under strong emotion.
Worker Safety.	Any issues that might affect worker safety when completing a visit. Examples include criminal activity, animals, hazards, weapons, infectious disease, substance abuse, psychological problems, homicidal/suicidal ideations, violent behavior, or sexual harassment.	Details on the situation and why it poses a risk. Include recommendations to mitigate risk.
Investigation Conclusion.	All relevant facts/evidence gathered that led to the allegation findings.	List the specific reasons that led to the finding for each allegation.



Documentation Considerations

Assessing Decisional Capacity

What is being addressed	What to Document	How to Document
Eligible adult has decisional capacity.	The eligible adult's ability to understand relevant information, rights, and responsibilities. The eligible adult's appreciation for the situation, likely consequences, and ability to identify risks and benefits. The eligible adult's refusal to accept services or interventions.	Document what the eligible adult said in their own words regarding the situation, possible remedies, alternatives, and understanding of risks, including the risk of refusing interventions. If they refuse interventions, why does the eligible adult believe their refusal to receive help is the right option? Document any of the eligible adult's concerns with interventions/services.
Eligible adult has decisional capacity issues.	Document the eligible adult's difficulty with expressing choice or reversals of choice, which may indicate a lack of decisional capacity and inability to draw a conclusion. The eligible adult's ability to take action to protect themselves from the consequences of remaining in the reported situation or condition. The eligible adult's perception of dangers or problems and understanding what would happen if no assistance is provided or the situation doesn't change. The eligible adult's inability to acknowledge their abusive or precarious situation (lack of insight).	Document what the eligible adult said in their own words regarding the situation. Document if the qualified adult has a distorted or simplistic view of their situation that doesn't fit the current problem. Document how often the eligible adult changes their mind during the conversation. Document if others easily influence the eligible adult. Document how the eligible adult demonstrates an inability to protect themselves from the situation physically or emotionally or cannot make a decision. Document any (negative) consequences to the eligible adult.
Interviews with collateral contacts regarding eligible adult's capacity.	Information or specific concerns provided by collateral contacts regarding the eligible adult's capacity. Observations/concerns that demonstrate the limitations of the eligible adult's decisional capacity.	Document the date, the relationship to the eligible adult, full name, contact information, role/position, and relevant statements. Document the collateral contact's specific information and observations rather than generic statements. For example, the eligible adult's confusion generally could be documented. Instead, demonstrate how confusion affects the eligible adult's decision-making ability. Gather any documentation that may provide information about capacity, e.g., hospital records, psychological tests, etc.