

## **NAPSA Code of Ethics**

Adult Protective Services programs and staff promote safety, independence, and quality-of-life for older adults and adults with disabilities who are being mistreated or in danger of being mistreated, and who are unable to protect themselves.

### **Guiding Value**

Every action taken by Adult Protective Services must balance the duty to protect the safety of the vulnerable adult with the adult's right to self-determination.

### **Secondary Value**

Older people and people with disabilities who are victims of mistreatment should be treated with honesty, caring, and respect.

### **Principles**

- Adults have the right to be safe.
- Adults retain all their civil and constitutional rights, e.g., the right to live their lives as they wish, manage their own finances, enter into contracts, marry etc. unless a court adjudicates otherwise.
- Adults have the right to make decisions that do not conform with societal norms as long as these decisions do not harm others.
- Adults have the right to accept or refuse services.

### **NAPSA (or APS) Practice Guidelines**

APS worker practice responsibilities include:

- Recognize that the interests of the adult are the first concern of any intervention.
- Avoid imposing personal values on others.
- Seek informed consent from the adult before providing services.
- Respect the adult's right to keep personal information confidential.
- Recognize individual differences such as cultural, historical, and personal values
- Honor the right of adults to receive information about their choices and options in a form or manner that they can understand.
- To the best one's ability, involve the adult as much as possible in developing the service plan.

- Focus on case planning that maximizes the vulnerable adult's independence and choice to the extent possible based on the adult's capacity.
- Use the least restrictive services first whenever possible – community-based services rather than institutionally-based services.
- Use family and informal support systems first as long as this is in the best interest of the adult.
- Maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries.
- In the absence of an adult's expressed wishes, support casework actions that are in the adult's best interest.
- Use substituted judgment in case planning when historical knowledge of the adult's values is available.
- Do no harm. Inadequate or inappropriate intervention may be worse than no intervention.