

C.A.A.N.E.
Collaboration Against Abuse Neglect & Exploitation Meeting
Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting
Wednesday October 28, 2020
8:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome & Introductions Dwayne T. Woods
Meeting called to order at 8:32 a.m.

II. Overview from the Office of the Ohio Consumers Counsel Amy Carles
Senior Outreach & Education Specialist
The Office of the Ohio's Consumer Counsel is the residential utility consumer advocate which means they represent residents utility customers through the public utility commissioners, the federal regulatory agency, state and federal courts, the appellate courts and matters that go before the general assembly in Ohio.

Amy's agency has jurisdiction to the utility companies in the Montgomery County areas that are regulated by the PUCO such as Vectren, DP&L and Duke. Whenever, these utilities want to raise their rates, change consumer protections or make changes that impacts the consumers as a rate payer, Amy's agency represents the consumer in those cases or anything that goes before the legislatures. The OOC also has an outreach and education department that covers the state and educate the consumers on what they need to know about their utility service.

A big piece of utility problems can be utility scams, especially right now during the transitions, companies are now able to disconnect consumer utility services. There are con artists who may contact you saying that you are going to be disconnected, which may be true, but the announcement of utility companies returning to disconnect unpaid bills is in the papers and in the media, the scam artists use this information in hopes of getting to your money before you pay your bills. OOC makes consumers aware of how you are to pay your utilities legally without being scammed and to only contact your utility companies phone numbers listed on your bills.

Also, someone could show up at your door telling you that you are going to get a better deal on your energy, this may or may not be true however, OOC will help you to determine if a deal like this would be good for you and how to handle these types of situations.

III. Presentation by Ohio Attorney General Monica Walker
Free Virtual Community Learning Opportunity
Protecting Seniors from Scams, Exploitation & Abuse

As of 2011, statistics show that one in every nine Americans aged 60 and older suffers from abuse each year and Ohio has the 6 eldest population in the country and those numbers are rapidly increasing.

In 2014 the Ohio Attorney General's Elder Justice Unit was established to: improve education efforts, boost research and raise awareness of elder abuse, provide leadership for improving the lives of elder victims, provide advocacy for additional funding/programming needs and finding solutions. The OAGO works as navigators to provide resources/referrals to other key partners and to make sure the elders don't fall through the cracks. Key partners include: Law Enforcement, Adult Protective Services, Long Term Care Ombudsman, Domestic Violence Advocates and Health Care Providers.

Elders are vulnerable in many ways: they are trusting and polite, have more assets, are less likely to report fraud, are independent and private, and are isolated. There is a long list of common scams: the grandparent scam, computer repair scam, credit repair scam, home improvement fraud, living trust scam and investment fraud to name a few. When elders are hiring home improvement or contractors, they can contact the OAGO or the Better Business Bureau to research the contractors. Elders should not make large deposits or pay in full before their contracting jobs are complete and should get everything in writing.

A few types of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual, financial exploitation and neglect by others or self. Abuse happens anywhere and everywhere: in the elder homes, nursing facilities and residential facilities. The victims usually know their abusers who are often a trusted loved one. To help the elders, you should get educated, stay active, do your homework, ask for help, file a complaint and always report to the proper authority. Recognize the following warning signs of elder abuse: changes in the older adult's physical appearances, changes in the older adult's personality, observing a dominating or threatening care giver or observing changes in the older adult's home environment.

Remember the signs of a scam: when you are asked to wire money or send a pre-paid gift card to a stranger, you won a contest you've never heard of or entered, you are pressured to act now, you have to pay a fee to receive a prize, your personal information is requested, you're asked to put down a large down payment as requested, a company refuses to provide written information or a company has no physical address and only uses a P.O. Box. Recognize these are signs of scams and if you see something, say something.

Monica Walker

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IV. Hot Topics

V. Other Business and Announcements

Brooke Lynch

Everything OCAPS was advocating for has been pushed into next year. They are still working on the revision to Rule 66 in terms of visitation for wards and facilities, when

people are denied visitation. OCAPS is looking to modify Rule 66 and have given a letter of support. Unfortunately, OCAPS took a 33% reduction in funding which directly impacts Ohio Hopes Outreach for OCAPS. To fill the gaps, the board members will pick up more of the outreach on behalf of OCAPS.

APS numbers were down for a moment in April 2020, we only had 62 active cases. The numbers were back up to 116 active cases in September 2020, 48 of those cases were exploitation.

VI. Adjourn

Dwayne T. Woods

**Next C.A.A.N.E. Meeting
January 27, 2021**

