



PRESS RELEASE

**Maryland Attorney General Joins Partnership to Combat Elder Financial Abuse
*PROTECT Week 2019 Events to Take Place Statewide, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Is
June 15***

BALTIMORE, MD (June 10, 2019) – To assist Marylanders in identifying and combatting fraud, especially against seniors and other vulnerable adults, the Office of the Attorney General, is participating in a statewide public awareness campaign during PROTECT Week (Protecting Older Americans from Financial Exploitation), June 10–15, 2019. Other partners of this campaign include AARP Maryland, Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Maryland, the Maryland Department of Aging, the Commissioner of Financial Regulation, the Office of the Comptroller, and other consumer protection groups.

PROTECT Week events include anti-fraud workshops and opportunities to shred sensitive documents to keep them out of the hands of identity thieves. Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh will be attending a press conference at Atrium Village in Owings Mills on Tuesday, June 11 at 10:30 AM, and additional events in Howard, Baltimore, Prince George’s, and Garrett Counties are scheduled throughout the week. The full schedule of events is available at www.protectweek.org. All PROTECT Week events are free and open to the public, but registration is required.

On June 14, 10:00 to 11:00 AM, AARP Maryland will host a telephone town hall with Attorney General Frosh, Comptroller Peter Franchot, Commissioner of Financial Regulation Antonio Salazar, Office of Adult Services Director Dorinda Adams, and CCCSMD President Helene Raynaud. Callers will learn how to identify, prevent, and report fraud and have the opportunity to ask the panel of experts questions about fraud prevention.

In Maryland more than 54,000 cases of fraud were reported in 2018, according to the Federal Trade Commission, with losses totaling more than \$18 million. An increasingly common scheme is the “grandparent” scam, in which callers pretend the victim’s relative is in jail and needs bail money wired. Other popular cons include “lottery scams,” in which victims are persuaded that they have won a contest and have to send money upfront to pay the taxes before receiving their winnings, and “tech support” scams, in which thieves seek to gain access to the victim’s personal computer through phone calls, emails, or “pop-up” ads on the computer.

“One of my office’s highest priorities is protecting seniors and vulnerable adults from financial abuse by way of deception, intimidation, or undue influence,” said Attorney General Frosh. “Sadly, these abuses can be perpetrated by close ‘friends and family’ as well as complete strangers.”

Reporting financial exploitation of elders can help put a stop to this kind of abuse. If you have questions about financial exploitation, think you or a loved one may have been a victim, or need guidance navigating a number of other consumer issues, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 410-528-8662.