

▶ POWERS OF ATTORNEY (POA) AND ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION

*Protecting the Legal Rights of
Older Adults in Ontario*

▶ WHAT IS A POA?

A Power of Attorney (POA) is a legal document that gives someone you designate with the authority to act on your behalf – usually when you're no longer able to make decisions yourself, due to illness or incapacity. It doesn't have to be an attorney, but should be someone you trust.

▶ POA MISUSE = ELDER ABUSE

Unfortunately, misuse of POA is a common form of elder abuse, especially financial abuse. It often goes unreported because it's committed by family members, caregivers, or persons in positions of trust.

▶ YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AS A SENIOR

- You can choose who you appoint as your "attorney"
- You can cancel (revoke) a POA at any time if you are mentally capable
- You may appoint more than one person to act together, separately or
- You can include written restrictions or conditions as your wishes are to be fulfilled

▶ WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT POA ABUSE

- Revoke the POA in writing. Notify your attorney and institutions like banks.
- Seek advice from a lawyer or legal aid clinic.
- Contact the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT) – they can investigate concerns and even apply for guardianship.
- Call the police if theft or fraud is suspected.

SOURCE :

Elder abuse and Knowing our legal rights (ACE)



▶ RED FLAGS OF POA ABUSE:

- Unexplained financial transactions or missing funds
- Property sold without your knowledge
- Bills unpaid despite having enough money
- Isolation from family, friends, or professionals
- You're not consulted about important decisions
- Your wishes are being ignored or overruled

▶ IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT) | 1-800-366-0335
www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca

Legal Aid Ontario | 1-800-668-8258
www.legalaid.on.ca

Victim Support Line (Ontario)
1-888-579-2888



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