

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas  
2 87th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2009

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1569

4  
5 By: Representative Hobbs  
6 By: Senator Bledsoe

## For An Act To Be Entitled

10 AN ACT TO AMEND VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE ADULT  
11 MALTREATMENT CUSTODY ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

14 AN ACT TO AMEND VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE  
15 ADULT MALTREATMENT CUSTODY ACT.

17  
18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

19  
20 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 9-20-103 is amended to read as follows:

21 9-20-103. Definitions.

22 As used in this chapter:

23 (1)(A) "Abuse" means with regard to any long-term care facility  
24 resident or any person who is at the Arkansas State Hospital an act by a  
25 caregiver that falls into any of the following categories:

26 (i) Any intentional and unnecessary physical act  
27 that inflicts pain on or causes injury to an endangered adult or an impaired  
28 adult, excluding court-ordered medical care or medical care requested by an  
29 endangered adult, an impaired adult, or a person who is legally authorized to  
30 make a medical decision on behalf of an endangered adult or an impaired  
31 adult;

32 (ii) Any intentional act that a reasonable person  
33 would believe subjects an endangered adult or impaired adult, regardless of  
34 age, ability to comprehend, or disability, to ridicule or psychological  
35 injury in a manner likely to provoke fear or alarm, excluding necessary care  
36 and treatment provided in accordance with generally recognized professional



1 standards of care;

2 (iii) Any intentional threat that a reasonable  
3 person would find credible and nonfrivolous to inflict pain on or cause  
4 injury to an endangered adult or an impaired adult except in the course of  
5 medical treatment or for justifiable cause; or

6 (iv) Any willful infliction of injury, unreasonable  
7 confinement, intimidation, or punishment with resulting physical harm, pain,  
8 or mental anguish.

9 (B) "Abuse" means with regard to any person who is not a  
10 long-term care facility resident or at the Arkansas State Hospital:

11 (i) Any intentional and unnecessary physical act  
12 that inflicts pain on or causes injury to an endangered adult or an impaired  
13 adult;

14 (ii) Any intentional act that a reasonable person  
15 would believe subjects an endangered adult or an impaired adult, regardless  
16 of age, ability to comprehend, or disability, to ridicule or psychological  
17 injury in a manner likely to provoke fear or alarm; or

18 (iii) Any intentional threat that a reasonable  
19 person would find credible and nonfrivolous to inflict pain on or cause  
20 injury to an endangered adult or an impaired adult except in the course of  
21 medical treatment or for justifiable cause;

22 (2) "Adult maltreatment" means abuse, exploitation, neglect,  
23 physical abuse, or sexual abuse of an adult;

24 (3) "Caregiver" means a related person or an unrelated person,  
25 an owner, an agent, a high managerial agent of a public or private  
26 organization, or a public or private organization that has the responsibility  
27 for the protection, care, or custody of an endangered adult or impaired adult  
28 as a result of assuming the responsibility voluntarily, by contract, through  
29 employment, or by order of the circuit court;

30 (4) "Custodian" means the Department of Human Services while the  
31 department is exercising a seventy-two hour hold on an endangered or  
32 impaired person or during the effective dates of an order granting custody to  
33 the department;

34 ~~(4)~~(5) "Department" means the Department of Human Services;

35 ~~(5)~~(6) "Endangered adult" means:

36 (A) An adult eighteen (18) years of age or older who:

1 (i) Is found to be in a situation or condition that  
2 poses a danger to himself or herself; and

3 (ii) Demonstrates a lack of capacity to comprehend  
4 the nature and consequences of remaining in that situation or condition; or

5 (B) An adult resident of a long-term care facility who:

6 (i) Is found to be in a situation or condition that  
7 poses an imminent risk of death or serious bodily harm to that person; and

8 (ii) Demonstrates a lack of capacity to comprehend  
9 the nature and consequences of remaining in that situation or condition;

10 ~~(6)~~(7) "Exploitation" means the:

11 ~~(A) The illegal or unauthorized use or management of an~~  
12 ~~endangered or impaired adult's funds, assets, or property or the use of an~~  
13 ~~endangered or impaired adult's person, power of attorney, or guardianship for~~  
14 ~~the profit or advantage of oneself or another; or~~

15 ~~(B) Misappropriation of property of an adult resident of a~~  
16 ~~long-term care facility, that is, the deliberate misplacement, exploitation,~~  
17 ~~or wrongful, temporary, or permanent use of a resident's belongings or money~~  
18 ~~without the resident's consent;~~

19 (A) Illegal or unauthorized use or management of an  
20 endangered person's or an impaired person's funds, assets, or property;

21 (B) Use of an adult endangered person's or an adult  
22 impaired person's power of attorney or guardianship for the profit or  
23 advantage of one's own self or another; or

24 (C) The fraudulent or otherwise illegal, unauthorized, or  
25 improper act or process of an individual, including a caregiver or fiduciary,  
26 that uses the resources of an endangered or impaired person or long-term care  
27 facility resident for monetary or personal benefit, profit, or gain or that  
28 results in depriving the person or resident of rightful access to or use of  
29 benefits, resources, belongings, or assets; or

30 (D) Misappropriation of property of a long-term care  
31 facility resident;

32 (8)(A) "Fiduciary" means a person or entity with the legal  
33 responsibility to:

34 (i) Make decisions on behalf of and for the benefit  
35 of another person; and

36 (ii) Act in good faith and with fairness.

1                    (B) "Fiduciary" includes without limitation, a trustee, a  
2 guardian, a conservator, an executor, an agent under financial power of  
3 attorney or health care power of attorney, or a representative payee;

4                    ~~(7)~~(9) "Imminent danger to health or safety" means a situation  
5 in which death or serious bodily harm could reasonably be expected to occur  
6 without intervention;

7                    ~~(8)(A)~~(10)(A) "Impaired adult" means a person eighteen (18)  
8 years of age or older who, as a result of mental or physical impairment, is  
9 unable to protect himself or herself from abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or  
10 exploitation.

11                    (B) For purposes of this chapter, residents of a long-term  
12 care facility are presumed to be impaired persons.

13                    (C) For purposes of this chapter, a person with a mental  
14 impairment does not include a person who is in need of acute psychiatric  
15 treatment, chronic mental health treatment, alcohol or drug abuse treatment  
16 or casework supervision by mental health professionals;

17                    ~~(9)~~(11) "Long-term care facility" means:

- 18                    (A) A nursing home;
- 19                    (B) A residential care facility;
- 20                    (C) A post-acute head injury retraining and residential
- 21 facility;
- 22                    (D) An assisted living facility;
- 23                    (E) An intermediate care facility for individuals with
- 24 mental retardation; or
- 25                    (F) Any facility that provides long-term medical or
- 26 personal care;

27                    ~~(10)~~(12) "Long-term care facility resident" means a person  
28 eighteen (18) years of age or older living in a long-term care facility;

29                    ~~(11)~~(13) "Long-term care facility resident maltreatment" means  
30 abuse, exploitation, neglect, physical abuse, or sexual abuse of an adult  
31 resident of a long-term care facility;

32                    ~~(12)~~(143) "Maltreated adult" means an adult who has been abused,  
33 exploited, neglected, physically abused, or sexually abused;

34                    (15) "Misappropriation of property of a long-term care facility  
35 resident" means the deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or wrongful,  
36 temporary, or permanent use of a long-term care facility resident's

1 belongings or money without the long-term care facility resident's consent;

2 ~~(13)~~(16) "Neglect" means:

3 (A) An act or omission by an endangered or impaired adult,  
4 for example, self-neglect; or

5 (B) An act or omission by a caregiver responsible for the  
6 care and supervision of an endangered or impaired adult constituting  
7 negligent failure to:

8 (i) Provide necessary treatment, rehabilitation,  
9 care, food, clothing, shelter, supervision, or medical services to an  
10 endangered or impaired adult;

11 (ii) Report health problems or changes in health  
12 problems or changes in the health condition of an endangered or impaired  
13 adult to the appropriate medical personnel;

14 (iii) Carry out a prescribed treatment plan; or

15 (iv) Provide to an adult resident of a long-term  
16 care facility goods or services necessary to avoid physical harm, mental  
17 anguish, or mental illness as defined in regulations promulgated by the  
18 Office of Long-Term Care of the Division of Medical Services of the  
19 Department of Human Services;

20 ~~(14)(A)~~(17)(A) "Physical injury" means the impairment of a  
21 physical condition or the infliction of substantial pain.

22 (B) If the person is an endangered or impaired adult,  
23 there is a presumption that any physical injury resulted in the infliction of  
24 substantial pain;

25 ~~(15)(A)~~(18)(A) "Protective services" means services to protect  
26 an endangered or impaired adult from:

27 (i) Self-neglect or self-abuse; or

28 (ii) Abuse or neglect by others.

29 (B) Protective services may include:

30 (i) Evaluation of the need for services;

31 (ii) Arrangements or referrals for appropriate  
32 services available in the community;

33 (iii) Assistance in obtaining financial benefits to  
34 which the person is entitled; or

35 (iv) As appropriate, referrals to law enforcement or  
36 prosecutors;



1 (C) Court-ordered protective services; or

2 (D) An order of investigation pursuant to this chapter.

3 (2) The probate division of circuit court shall retain  
4 jurisdiction for one hundred eighty (180) days after the death of an adult in  
5 the custody of the Department of Human Services to enter orders concerning  
6 disposition of the body of the adult as well as any assets of the adult,  
7 including the ability to order payment for services rendered or goods  
8 purchased by or for the adult while in the custody of the department before  
9 the death of the adult.

10 (b)(1) A proceeding under this chapter shall be commenced in the  
11 probate division of the circuit court of the county where:

12 ~~(1)(A)~~ The maltreated adult resides; or

13 ~~(2)(B)~~ The maltreatment occurred.

14 (2)(A) An adult custody proceeding shall not be dismissed if a  
15 proceeding is filed in the incorrect county.

16 (B) If the proceeding is filed in the incorrect county,  
17 the adult custody proceeding shall be transferred to the proper county upon  
18 discovery of the proper county for venue.

19 (C) Following the long-term custody hearing, the court may  
20 on its own motion or on motion of any party transfer the case to another  
21 county if the judge in the other venue agrees to accept the transfer.

22 (c) Eligibility for services from the department, including custody,  
23 for aliens and nonaliens shall be the same eligibility requirements for the  
24 Arkansas Medical Assistance Program.

25 (d) No person may be taken into custody or placed in the custody of  
26 the department under this section if that person is in need of:

27 (1) Acute psychiatric treatment;

28 (2) Chronic mental health treatment;

29 (3) Alcohol or drug abuse treatment;

30 (4) Protection from domestic abuse if that person is mentally  
31 competent; or

32 (5) Casework supervision by mental health professionals.

33 (e) No adult may be taken into custody or placed in the custody of the  
34 department for the sole purpose of consenting to the adult's medical  
35 treatment.

36 (f)(1) If the maltreated adult is found to be indigent and the court

1 appoints the Arkansas Public Defender Commission as counsel for the  
2 maltreated adult, the commission shall represent the maltreated adult as to  
3 the issue of deprivation of liberty, but not with respect to issues involving  
4 property, money, investments, or other fiscal issues.

5 (2)(A) As to issues requiring court approval under § 9-20-  
6 120(b), the commission’s role shall be to ensure that qualified medical  
7 personnel provide testimony or an affidavit with clear and convincing  
8 evidence to support the proposed medical action or inaction.

9 (B) A hearing is not required if counsel for both parties  
10 agree to waive the hearing or if an emergency exists for entry of an order.

11 (3) If the court appoints the public defender as counsel for the  
12 maltreated adult and assets are later identified for the maltreated adult,  
13 the court may award an attorney’s fee to the commission.

14  
15 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 9-20-109 is amended to read as follows:  
16 9-20-109. Commencement of proceedings.

17 (a) Proceedings shall be commenced by filing a petition with the clerk  
18 of the probate division of circuit court ~~or by transfer by another court.~~

19 (b) Only the Department of Human Services may file a petition seeking  
20 ex parte emergency relief.

21 (c) No fees may be charged or collected by the clerk in cases brought  
22 by the department, including, but not limited to:

- 23 (1) Fees for filing;
- 24 (2) Summons; or
- 25 (3) Subpoenas.

26 (d) The court shall immediately appoint the Arkansas Public Defender  
27 Commission to represent the maltreated adult if:

28 (1) There is reasonable cause to believe the maltreated adult is  
29 indigent; or

30 (2) The maltreated adult’s liberty interest is in jeopardy and  
31 the financial condition of the maltreated adult is undetermined.

32  
33 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 9-20-111(c), concerning notification of the  
34 filing of a petition regarding adult maltreatment, is amended to read as  
35 follows:

36 (c) The pleadings served on the respondent shall include a statement



1 of the right to:

2 (1)(A) ~~Effective assistance of counsel~~ Have an attorney  
3 represent him or her in this matter.

4 (B) If the respondent desires an attorney to represent him  
5 or her but the respondent cannot afford to hire an attorney, an attorney will  
6 be appointed to represent the respondent by the court at no cost to the  
7 respondent;

8 (2) Be present at the hearing;

9 (3) Present evidence on the respondent's own behalf;

10 (4) Cross-examine witnesses who testify against him or her;

11 (5) Present witnesses in the respondent's own behalf;

12 (6) Remain silent; and

13 (7) View and copy all petitions, reports, and documents retained  
14 in the court file.

15

16 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 9-20-117(c), concerning long-term custody  
17 of a maltreated adult, is amended to read as follows:

18 (c) The court may order long-term custody with the Department of Human  
19 Services if the court determines that:

20 (1) The adult has a mental or physical impairment or lacks the  
21 capacity to comprehend the nature and consequences of remaining in a  
22 situation that presents an imminent danger to his or her health or safety;

23 (2) The adult is unable to provide for his or her own protection  
24 from maltreatment; and

25 (3) The court finds clear and convincing evidence that the adult  
26 to be placed is in need of placement as provided in this chapter.

27

28 SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 9-20-118, concerning review hearings  
29 regarding maltreated adults, is amended to add an additional subsection to  
30 read as follows:

31 (d)(1) Upon presentation of a statement under oath by a medical doctor  
32 that attendance at the hearing is not in the best interest of the adult based  
33 on the adult's mental incapacity or physical health, the court shall waive  
34 the presence of the adult at a review hearing unless there is a showing by  
35 the adult's attorney that the adult's attendance at the court hearing is  
36 necessary.

1           (2) If it is not in the adult’s best interest to appear at court  
 2 under subdivision (d)(1) of this section, the adult may submit a written  
 3 statement or an audio or video statement for consideration by the court.  
 4

5           SECTION 8. Arkansas Code § 9-20-119(c)(1), concerning the assets of a  
 6 maltreated adult, is amended to read as follows:

7           (c)(1) The court may appoint the department only as custodian of the  
 8 adult and not as guardian of the person or of the estate of the adult.  
 9

10          SECTION 9. Arkansas Code § 9-20-120, is amended to read as follows:

11          9-20-120. Duties and responsibilities of custodian.

12          (a)(1) If the probate division of circuit court appoints the  
 13 Department of Human Services as the legal custodian of a maltreated adult,  
 14 the department shall:

15                   (A) Secure care and maintenance for the person;

16                   (B) Honor any advance directives, such as living wills, if  
 17 the legal documents were executed in conformity with applicable laws; and

18                   (C) Find a person to be guardian of the estate of the  
 19 adult if a guardian of the estate is needed.

20          (2) If the court appoints the department as the legal custodian  
 21 of a maltreated adult, the department may:

22                   (A) Consent to medical care for the adult;

23                   (B) Obtain physical or psychological evaluations; and

24                   (C) Obtain medical, financial, and other records of the  
 25 adult.

26          (b) The department as custodian shall not make any of the following  
 27 decisions without receiving express court approval:

28                   (1) Consent to abortion, sterilization, psychosurgery, or  
 29 removal of bodily organs unless a procedure is necessary in a situation  
 30 threatening the life of the maltreated adult;

31                   (2) Consent to withholding life-saving treatment;

32                   (3) Authorize experimental medical procedures;

33                   (4) Authorize termination of parental rights;

34                   (5) Prohibit the adult from voting;

35                   (6) Prohibit the adult from obtaining a driver’s license;

36                   (7) Consent to a settlement or compromise of any claim by or

1 against the adult or his or her estate;

2 (8) Consent to the liquidation of assets of the adult through  
3 such activities as an estate sale; ~~or~~

4 (9) Amputation of any part of the body; or

5 (10) Consent to withholding life-sustaining treatment.

6 (c)(1) Upon the death of a person in the custody of the department,  
7 the department shall abide by a prior arrangement made by the person as to  
8 the disposition of the person's body.

9 (2) If prior arrangements were not made:

10 (A)(1) The department may request the court to grant  
11 authority to the department to use funds or resources of the deceased person  
12 as to disposition of the body; or

13 (B) Upon consent from the person's closest family  
14 member or after notice and the opportunity to be heard by the court, the  
15 department may consent to donate the person's body to medical science.

16 (3) The department is not responsible for any costs related to  
17 disposition of the person's body.

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