

481—52.1(235E) Definitions. For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

“Assault of a dependent adult” means the commission of any act which is generally intended to cause pain or injury to a dependent adult, or which is generally intended to result in physical contact which would be considered by a reasonable person to be insulting or offensive or any act which is intended to place another in fear of immediate physical contact which will be painful, injurious, insulting, or offensive, coupled with the apparent ability to execute the act.

“Caretaker” means a person who is a staff member of a facility or program who provides care, protection, or services to a dependent adult voluntarily, by contract, through employment, or by order of the court. For the purpose of an allegation of exploitation, if the caretaker-dependent adult relationship started when a staff member was employed in the facility, the staff member may be considered a caretaker after employment is terminated.

“Confidentiality” means the withholding of information from any manner of communication, public or private.

“Court” means the district court.

“Department” means the department of inspections and appeals.

“Dependent adult” means a person 18 years of age or older whose ability to perform the normal activities of daily living or to provide for the person’s own care or protection is impaired, either temporarily or permanently.

“Dependent adult abuse” means any of the following as a result of the willful misconduct or gross negligence or reckless act or omission of a caretaker, taking into account the totality of the circumstances: physical injury, unreasonable confinement, unreasonable punishment, assault, sexual offense, sexual exploitation, exploitation, neglect, or personal degradation. “Dependent adult abuse” does not include any of the following:

1. Circumstances in which the dependent adult declines medical treatment if the dependent adult holds a belief or is an adherent of a religion whose tenets and practices call for reliance on spiritual means in place of reliance on medical treatment.
2. Circumstances in which the dependent adult’s caretaker, acting in accordance with the dependent adult’s stated or implied consent, declines medical treatment or care.
3. The withholding or withdrawing of health care from a dependent adult who is terminally ill in the opinion of a licensed physician, when the withholding or withdrawing of health care is done at the request of the dependent adult or at the request of the dependent adult’s next of kin, attorney in fact, or guardian pursuant to the applicable procedures under Iowa Code chapter 125, 144A, 144B, 222, 229, or 633.

“Exploitation” means a caretaker who knowingly obtains, uses, endeavors to obtain to use, or who misappropriates, a dependent adult’s funds, assets, medications, or property with the intent to temporarily or permanently deprive a dependent adult of the use, benefit, or possession of the funds, assets, medication, or property for the benefit of someone other than the dependent adult.

“Facility” means a health care facility as defined in Iowa Code section 135C.1 or a hospital as defined in Iowa Code section 135B.1.

“Gross negligence” means an act or omission that signifies more than ordinary inadvertence or inattention, but less than conscious indifference to consequences; and, in other words, means an extreme departure from the ordinary standard of care.

“Immediately,” for purposes of mandatory reporters’ reporting of suspected dependent adult abuse, means within 24 hours.

“Inspector” means a surveyor, monitor or investigator with the department or any department designee.

“Intimate relationship” means a significant romantic involvement between two persons that need not include sexual involvement, but does not include a casual social relationship or association in a business or professional capacity. In determining whether persons are in an intimate relationship, the following nonexclusive list of factors may be considered:

1. The duration of the relationship,
2. The frequency of interaction,

3. Whether the relationship has been terminated, and
4. The nature of the relationship, characterized by either person's expectation of sexual or romantic involvement.

"Misappropriates" means taking unfair advantage of or wrongfully or dishonestly exercising control over property.

"Neglect of a dependent adult" means the deprivation of the minimum food, shelter, clothing, supervision, physical or mental health care, or other care necessary to maintain a dependent adult's life or physical or mental health.

"Person" means person as defined in Iowa Code section 4.1.

"Personal degradation" means a willful act or statement by a caretaker intended to shame, degrade, humiliate, or otherwise harm the personal dignity of a dependent adult, or where the caretaker knew or reasonably should have known the act or statement would cause shame, degradation, humiliation, or harm to the personal dignity of a reasonable person. "Personal degradation" includes the taking, transmission, or display of an electronic image of a dependent adult by a caretaker, where the caretaker's actions constitute a willful act or statement intended to shame, degrade, humiliate, or otherwise harm the personal dignity of the dependent adult, or where the caretaker knew or reasonably should have known the act would cause shame, degradation, humiliation, or harm to the personal dignity of a reasonable person. "Personal degradation" does not include the taking, transmission, or display of an electronic image of a dependent adult for the purpose of reporting dependent adult abuse to law enforcement, the department, or other regulatory agency that oversees caretakers or enforces abuse or neglect provisions, or for the purpose of treatment or diagnosis or as part of an ongoing investigation. "Personal degradation" also does not include the taking, transmission, or display of an electronic image by a caretaker in accordance with the facility's or program's confidentiality policy and release of information or consent policies.

"Physical injury" means a physical injury, or injury which is at a variance with the history given of the injury, which involves a breach of skill or care or learning ordinarily exercised by a caretaker in similar circumstances. "Physical injury" includes damage to any bodily tissue to the extent that the tissue must undergo a healing process in order to be restored to a sound and healthy condition, damage to any bodily tissue to the extent that the tissue cannot be restored to a sound and healthy condition, or damage to any bodily tissue which results in the death of the person who has sustained the damage.

"Program" means an elder group home as defined in Iowa Code section 231B.1, an assisted living program certified under Iowa Code section 231C.3, or an adult day services program as defined in Iowa Code section 231D.1.

"Recklessly" means that a person acts or fails to act with respect to a material element of a public offense, when the person is aware of and consciously disregards a substantial and unjustifiable risk that the material element exists or will result from the act or omission. The risk must be of such a nature and degree that disregard of the risk constitutes a gross deviation from the standard conduct that a reasonable person would observe in the situation.

"Registry" means the central registry for dependent adult abuse information established in Iowa Code section 235B.5.

"Report" means a verbal or written statement, made to the department, which alleges that dependent adult abuse has occurred.

"Resident" means a resident of a health care facility as defined in Iowa Code chapter 135C, a patient in a hospital as defined in Iowa Code chapter 135B, a tenant of an assisted living program as defined in Iowa Code chapter 231C, a tenant in an elder group home as defined in Iowa Code chapter 231B, or a participant in an adult day services program as defined in Iowa Code chapter 231D.

"Sexual exploitation" means any consensual or nonconsensual sexual conduct with a dependent adult by a caretaker whether within a facility or program or at a location outside of a facility or program. "Sexual exploitation" includes but is not limited to:

1. Kissing;
2. Touching of the clothed or unclothed breast, groin, buttock, anus, pubes, or genitals;
3. A sex act as defined in Iowa Code section 702.17;

4. The transmission, display or taking of electronic images of the unclothed breast, groin, buttock, anus, pubes, or genitals of a dependent adult by a caretaker for a purpose not related to treatment, care, monitoring, assessment or diagnosis or as part of an ongoing investigation.

“Sexual exploitation” does not include touching which is part of a necessary examination, treatment, or care by a caretaker acting within the scope of the practice or employment of the caretaker; the exchange of a brief touch or hug between the dependent adult and a caretaker for the purpose of reassurance, comfort, or casual friendship; or touching between spouses or domestic partners in an intimate relationship.

“*Sexual offense*” means the commission of a sexual offense under Iowa Code chapter 709 or Iowa Code section 726.2 with or against a dependent adult.

“*Staff member*” means an individual who provides direct or indirect treatment or services to residents in a facility or program. Direct treatment or services include those provided through person-to-person contact. Indirect treatment or services include those provided without person-to-person contact such as those provided by administration, dietary, laundry, and maintenance. Specifically excluded from the definition of “staff member” are individuals such as part-time volunteers, building contractors, repair workers or others who are in a facility or program for a very limited purpose, are not in the facility or program on a regular basis, or do not provide any treatment or services to the residents of the facility or program.

“*Unreasonable confinement*” means confinement that includes but is not limited to the use of restraints, either physical or chemical, for the convenience of staff. “Unreasonable confinement” does not include the use of confinement and restraints if the methods are employed in conformance with state and federal standards governing confinement and restraint or as authorized by a physician or physician extender.

“*Unreasonable punishment*” means a willful act or statement intended by the caretaker to punish, agitate, confuse, frighten, or cause emotional distress to the dependent adult. Such willful act or statement includes but is not limited to intimidating behavior, threats, harassment, deceptive acts, or false or misleading statements.

“*Willful misconduct*” means an intentional act of unreasonable character committed with disregard for a known or obvious risk that is so great as to make it highly probable that harm will follow.

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