

481—52.1(235E) Definitions. The definitions set forth in Iowa Code section 235E.1 are incorporated herein by reference. For purposes of this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions apply:

“*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.

“*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.

“*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.

“*Misappropriates*” means taking unfair advantage of or wrongfully or dishonestly exercising control over property.

“*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.

“*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. Specifically included in the definition of “staff member” is an employee, health care employment agency worker, or other independent contractor who otherwise meets the definition. 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.

[ARC 8294B, IAB 11/18/09, effective 1/1/10; ARC 3235C, IAB 8/2/17, effective 9/6/17; ARC 6801C, IAB 1/11/23, effective 2/15/23]