

Adult Protective Services (APS)

Adult Protective Services (APS) is a state mandated case management program that provides services to at-risk physically and/or mentally impaired adults. APS works to help at-risk clients live safely in their homes. Anyone can make a referral to APS. This includes family members, neighbors, and community-based providers. Referrals can be made anonymously.

Who is eligible to receive APS services?

To be eligible for APS Services, individuals must fit **all** the criteria below. The referred individual must be:

- eighteen years of age or older
- mentally and/or physically impaired
- unable to manage their own resources, carry out the activities of daily living, or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or other hazardous situations
- have no one available who is willing and able to assist them responsibly

What types of cases can you refer to APS?

APS clients often suffer from or are threatened with:

- Abuse (physical and verbal)
- Neglect by a third party
- Self-neglect
- Financial exploitation
- Hoarding behavior
- Threatened eviction or utility shut off

Eligibility will be considered if these issues arise from a person's physical or mental impairment.

How do you make a referral to APS?

You can make a referral to APS in two ways.

- To make a referral by phone, call the APS Central Intake Unit at 718-557-1399 Monday through Friday from 9am to 5pm.
- To make an online referral, submit [a web-based referral form](#).

What happens when you make a referral to APS?

- When you make a referral by phone, an APS Central Intake Unit (CIU) representative will gather information from you about the at-risk person. If this individual appears to meet the APS eligibility criteria during the intake process, the referral will be forwarded to the field office in the borough where the individual lives. A case worker will then make a home visit to the individual to determine eligibility. Referrals accepted by CIU will be visited within 3 business days and within 24 hours if the referral is deemed an emergency.
 - **It is important to note that if a home visit is warranted, this does not mean that the case has been accepted for services.**

What happens during an APS home visit?

- During the initial home visit, an APS caseworker will review the person's:
 - Physical and mental health
 - Living conditions
 - Household budget and sources of income
 - Status of rent and utility payments
- The caseworker will also evaluate if there is evidence of:
 - Abuse and/or neglect
 - Financial exploitation
 - Other potential hazards
- APS does not forcibly enter living spaces but instead will try to work with the referred individual toward a voluntary visit
- It is during the home visit that APS will make an eligibility determination.
- APS has up to 60 days from the time of the referral to determine if the case will be accepted for APS services.

If APS accepts my referral, what kinds of services will they provide?

If the referred individual is determined eligible for APS services, caseworkers will develop a service plan to meet the client's needs. APS must use the least restrictive intervention, and caseworkers will make service plan adjustments as needed.

Some Services APS can provide are:

- Applying and recertifying for public benefits
- Referrals to outpatient medical and mental health providers
- Referrals to law enforcement for situations of abuse, neglect, exploitation.
- Assistance with payment of utility/rental arrears
- Heavy duty cleaning in cases that involve serious hoarding.
 - Removal of debris that presents a safety/health hazard only.
 - This service must be voluntary unless there is an appointed guardian.
- Petitioning Housing Court for the appointment of a Guardians ad Litem to advocate for the APS client in an eviction proceeding.
- Financial management of Social Security benefits (Representative Payee)
- Petitioning Supreme Court for the appointment of a community guardian to provide long-term financial and personal services.

What will happen if the referred person refuses an APS home visit or rejects APS services?

- Most APS cases are referred by a concerned family member, provider, or community member. According to APS, most often referred individuals do not believe they need help, or they do not want help.
- If the referred individual rejects an initial home visit, APS must show due diligence by making several attempts to establish a voluntary connection with them.
- Likewise, if a person is accepted for APS services but the client rejects services, APS will try to establish a relationship with the client using the least restrictive and intrusive measures possible. Unless there is an acute and life-threatening emergency, referred individuals can reject services if they choose.

- In instances when a referred individual refuses assistance, APS **may** employ the aid of medical and mental health providers to help determine the individual's decision-making capabilities and to help decide if involuntary services are warranted.

How will I know if my referral has been accepted or denied?

The person making the referral will be notified by mail if the intake unit determines that the information provided substantiates a need for a home visit by the APS field office.

Due to confidentiality constraints APS cannot share an individual's eligibility status or the subsequent service plan unless the inquiring individual has a signed release from the referred person permitting the release of information.

How can I get a status update on my referral?

If you have not heard from APS but would like an update on the status of your referral, you can email apsrefer@hra.nyc.gov. Please note that this email is for inquiries ONLY and is not to be used to submit referrals.

Helpful Tips

- When you make a referral, try to address **all the eligibility** criteria for APS services to the best of your ability:
 - Try your best to communicate why you think the referred individual is in danger.
 - Example: "the referred person is unable to manage paying her rent independently and is now facing eviction."
 - Try to highlight the connection between the referred individual's situation and their physical or mental impairment.
 - Example: "The referred person's mental illness hinders them from independently managing their finances. Because of their mental illness, they are not able to pay bills independently and are at risk of eviction."
 - Communicate that no one is available to help the referred person or that the referred person will not accept any offered help.
 - Example: "The referred person does not have any family or friends that can assist them responsibly in managing their money or pay rent."
 - Example: "Our family has offered to help, but they are refusing our support and won't accept any help."
 - APS employs the assistance of contracted vendors due to the high volume of cases in their program. These vendors provide the same services and are bound by the same mandates and criteria that apply to any APS matter.

The information above is meant to help you understand how the APS process works, why a referral may be accepted or rejected, and the kinds of services that a person will receive if they are accepted for services. APS provides life-saving services to thousands of New Yorkers every year. We at NAMI-NYC encourage you to make a referral if you think a person is at risk and can benefit from their services.

For more information:

https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hra/downloads/pdf/services/aps/APS_BROCHURE.pdf
<https://www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/adult-protective-services.page>

About NAMI-NYC

At the National Alliance on Mental Illness of New York City (NAMI-NYC), we assist thousands of families and individuals affected by mental illness annually through free education, support, and advocacy.

NAMI-NYC offers [mental health classes](#), [Support Groups](#), [family mentoring](#), and a [Helpline](#) with translation services in 180+ languages. Our support services are free regardless of income, insurance, or immigration status. Contact our Helpline **M-F from 10am to 5pm** and we'll connect you with NAMI-NYC services or provide you with community resources that can help you take the next step in your journey.

Phone/Text: 212-684-3264

Chat: <https://naminycmetro.org/helpline/>

Email: helpline@naminyc.org