

## Scenario

The Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC) is an independent agency within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts charged with ensuring that people with disabilities from age 18 through 59 are not abused by their caretakers.

The organization handles reports of abuse or neglect communicated by alleged victims (ALVs) themselves or by others (Reporters). Some Reporters, such as medical professionals or teachers, are required by their roles to report suspected abuse, while others such as acquaintances of the ALVs are not mandated to report it.

Reports are submitted via phone call or web form. Phone calls are received either by a 24x7 third-party call service or by the internal DPPC Intake staff during office hours. Either group creates an Abuse Report, gathering all the pertinent data about the ALV, the Reporter, the alleged abusers (ALABs), the nature of the incident being reported (Allegation), and an assessment of the current danger to the ALV (Risk).

Based on one or more submitted reports, the DPPC Intake staff then create an Intake record about the reported incident. All reports about the same incident (including future reports) are connected to the single Intake record. Intake staff then evaluate the claims of abuse and triage the case based on the following four definitions as related to DPPC jurisdictional criteria:

- **4A** - When a report is determined to be outside of DPPC jurisdiction based on one or more the following:
  - The report involves a hospital, nursing home or other long term care facility, refer to Department of Public Health (DPH)
  - The ALV is under the age of 18 years, refer to Department of Children and Families (DCF)
  - The ALV is over the age of 59, refer to Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA)
- **4B** - When caretaker is a state agency where the ALV lives in a residential care setting and the ALAB is a paid caregiver, DPPC investigates allegations of abuse or neglect.
- **4C** - When the alleged abuse or neglect occurs in a private setting or by a non-paid caregiver, DPPC investigates allegations of abuse or neglect.
- **Screened Out** - Cases that do not meet the DPPC Jurisdictional criteria for the definition of abuse or neglect or when the ALAB is not a caretaker or when the complaint is financial in nature.

All Intake cases are also reviewed by a State Police unit at DPPC for criminality.

For cases screened in (4B and 4C), there are statutory deadlines for acting on the case including 10 days to produce an Initial Report and 45 days to produce the final 19C Report. DPPC Oversight staff are assigned to supervise the progress of the case and protective services provided during and sometimes after the final report is submitted. DPPC Investigator staff are assigned to conduct the investigation of the case, which involves several separate required elements including but not limited to a visit to the site, interviewing the reporter, interviewing the ALV, gathering evidence, etc.

Eventually a full PDF report is generated and is finalized by the Oversight staff. A Legal staff member copies the final report to digital storage and sends copies to any relevant state agencies or facilities.

In support of the workflow, the DPPC maintains a FileMaker database that has interfaces via the web for third-party call center staff, online form submission, and for the internal and external investigators submitting reports. FileMaker also has a fully-featured client interface for Intake, Oversight, and Legal workflow, and for dashboards and reporting.