



# BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE PROTECTION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND OLDER ADULTS

## THE IMPACT

The Building Partnerships Initiative continues to enhance the safety and well-being of persons with disabilities and older adults, providing the groundwork for effective investigations of crimes committed against persons with disabilities and older adults, as well as prevention strategies. Through the efforts of BPI, thousands of individuals have been trained to effectively recognize, report, investigate abuse and neglect, and prosecute crimes committed against persons with a disability and older adults, including adults with disabilities, local and state police, adult protection and human service investigators, assistant district attorneys, victim witness advocates, court and medical personnel, human service providers and others. The initiative has changed the way our state addresses crimes committed against persons with disabilities and older adults, affording them the same protections and rights as the public at large while holding offenders accountable.

## REPORTING ABUSE & NEGLECT

Each year, DPPC receives thousands of reports of abuse and neglect through its **24-hour Hotline at (800) 426-9009**. Deaf or Hard of Hearing callers, please use VRS or MassRelay at 711. DPPC's State Police Detective Unit (SPDU) reviews **every complaint** the DPPC Hotline receives to determine which ones constitute criminal acts against a person with a disability.

### BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVE

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## ABOUT

Building Partnerships for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities and Older Adults (BPI) is a statewide Massachusetts initiative that, using a multidisciplinary approach, links law enforcement and prosecutors, adult protection and human services, self-advocates and others to address abuse, neglect and crimes committed against persons with a disability and older adults. Established in 1999, BPI is currently funded through an interstate agreement from the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to the Office of Hampden District Attorney Anthony D. Gulluni.

## GOALS OF THE INITIATIVE

Through formal Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), BPI brings together, in each Massachusetts county, the District Attorney, Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC), human service organizations and law enforcement agencies and establishes protocols for the investigation and prosecution of cases involving victims with a disability.

The goals of the initiative are:

- To provide protection, treatment and continuity of care for persons with a disability and older adults who are a victim of crime
- To ensure that crimes committed against persons with a disability and older adults are promptly reported and investigated
- To increase communication and cooperation between law enforcement and agencies providing services to persons with a disability and older adults
- To increase awareness of crimes committed against persons with a disability and older adults

## THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The work of BPI, including its training and legislative activities, is coordinated and overseen by a steering committee. The BPI Steering Committee is co-chaired by Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC) Executive Director Nancy A. Alterio and retired Northwestern District Attorney Elizabeth D. Scheibel. Other steering committee members include representatives of adult protection and human services, district attorneys, the attorney general and state police, victim services, public health, and self-advocates. The Steering Committee oversees BPI initiatives, such as the Prosecutors, Adult Protective Services (APS) and Law Enforcement (PAL) Working Group that addresses issues related to investigations and prosecutions involving victims with a disability and older adults, and the Peer Support Network (PSN) that brings together survivors of sexual violence with disabilities to support each other on their path to healing.

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