



A Consumer Update from Mat Heck, Jr., Prosecuting Attorney



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Montgomery County Prosecutor

Hiring a Personal Assistant for the Elderly or Disabled

A personal assistant to help with the care of an elderly or disabled person can be very helpful in maintaining that person's sense of independence, while at the same time helping to ensure their safety. A personal assistant can help with everyday chores, such as laundry, cleaning, cooking, grocery shopping, and hygiene. Unfortunately, giving personal assistants access to personal and financial information can sometimes lead to theft and other fraudulent behavior. Here are some steps to follow in hiring a personal assistant to help keep that from happening.



- Go through a recognized agency that has been checked out with the Better Business Bureau.
- Make sure that the agency does criminal background checks on each and every one of its employees.
- Look for agencies that are licensed and bonded (insured).
- Inquire into the training that the personal assistants must complete before being allowed in your loved one's home.
- Personally interview the assistant.
- If the assistant will need access to finances, set up a separate bank account that only contains the funds necessary to pay for matters that will be handled by the assistant.
- Do not hire someone who has no experience with the physical or mental issues that your loved one has.
- Do not hire someone who has no accountability to an employer or agency.

While the personal assistant can help with the day to day needs of your loved one, review how things are going frequently. If something seems amiss, look into it right away and make changes as soon as possible so your loved one can live out their mature years with confidence and security.

The above ALERT is part of the Montgomery County Prosecuting Attorney's initiative to help citizens become aware of ways they can avoid becoming a victim, or ways they can help stop criminal activity that may be occurring. Upon request, the office can provide presentations on crime prevention actions and activities to halt crime and increase the quality of life in our community.

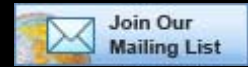
If you would like additional information on the above ALERT, or would like additional information regarding our programs to assist consumers in general and/or seniors in particular, please contact Kimberly Oliver, Supervising Attorney,

Adult Protection Unit, or Jon Marshall, Supervising Attorney, Fraud and Economic Crimes Unit at 937-225-5757.

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