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**NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AG Schimel Launches “Safe Seniors,” Offers Hidden Cameras to Help  
Family Members Expose Abuse of Elderly and Disabled**

GREEN BAY, Wis. – Attorney General Brad Schimel announced today the beginning of “Safe Seniors Camera Program,” a new pilot project to help concerned loved ones stop suspected in-home caregivers from abusing elderly and disabled patients. The new program allows Wisconsin residents, who suspect a caregiver is abusing their loved one, to use a covert camera to provide surveillance over someone who may have been harmed by a caregiver in their residence.

“One in nine seniors have reported being abused, neglected or exploited in the last twelve months, but we also know that elder abuse is drastically underreported<sup>1</sup>. There’s nothing worse than feeling helpless when a loved one is being taken advantage of,” said Attorney General Schimel. “These cameras will either give peace of mind to a patient’s family or provide needed evidence to allow law enforcement and public health to immediately intervene and protect the abused patient.”

The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) will provide DOJ-owned cameras and memory cards, through local partner law enforcement agencies, to a community member who contacts the Wisconsin Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) and signs a contract. Participants will receive a camera and memory card for up to 30 days, and are required to, on a daily basis, save any recordings and notify a local law enforcement agency or DCI of any recordings that the resident believes may depict illegal conduct. The New Jersey Attorney General’s Office has had success stopping abuse through a similar hidden-camera program.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.napsa-now.org/policy-advocacy/exploitation>

Members of the following communities can contact DOJ at 608-267-1313 to begin the application process.

- Appleton Police Department
- Brown County Sheriff's Office
- Fond du Lac Police Department
- Grand Chute Police Department
- Oshkosh Police Department
- Outagamie County Sheriff's Office
- Winnebago County Sheriff's Office

Attorney General Schimel's administration has prioritized elder abuse and launched the Attorney General's Task Force on Elder Abuse in August 2017. The task force is charged with compiling the resources and knowledge of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals to study the impact of elder abuse in Wisconsin and assess ways to improve outcomes for this growing population of citizens. In addition to developing strategies to address barriers in investigation and prosecutions of elder abuse, the task force will strengthen consumer protection for seniors and create recommendations for improved cross-system communications.

In January 2018, Attorney General Brad Schimel launched a [radio ad campaign](#) to raise awareness about elder abuse and encourage citizens to report abuse against seniors at Medicaid-funded or other senior care facilities.

To report suspected financial, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, please [contact your county elder adult-at-risk agency](#) or call 1-800-488-3780. If you witness an act of abuse, neglect, or exploitation that requires immediate attention, please call 911.