

## **Introducing The Gatekeeper Program:**

The Gatekeeper Program is designed to assist vulnerable adults who need help, but do not know how to access it. Each year, the vulnerable population grows and in fact, people over 65 make up the fastest-growing segment of our population.

Many live alone or have little contact with others and if they become ill or unable to function independently, they can easily go unnoticed and unattended. The Gatekeeper Program seeks to connect people by enlisting the help of others, who in the normal course of their jobs may have contact with the older adult or those with disabilities.

There are numerous Gatekeepers who in the normal course of their day can help open the gates between vulnerable people and the social service agencies that can help them. All a Gatekeeper needs to do is learn to recognize certain danger signals such as a change in appearance or behavior, signs of confusion or disability and make a phone call.

### **Almost anyone with public contact can be a Gatekeeper.**

A Gatekeeper might be a supermarket clerk, bank teller, pharmacist, utility meter reader, customer service representative, mail carrier, or newspaper deliverer — the list is virtually endless.

## **How to access the program:**

A single phone call from a Gatekeeper may help a person with a disability or an older person become aware of community services that are available and make it possible for them to receive assistance before a difficult situation becomes a crisis.

## **How can I help?**

This brochure lists some of the warning signs that may indicate a person with a disability or an older adult is in need of assistance. When you call the Gatekeeper Program, Adult Protective Services staff will take down the information and contact the person to assess their needs. Assistance may be provided in social and health services, medical and personal care, household chore services, and transportation.

*The elderly and those with disabilities in our community deserve to be informed of alternatives and options that will preserve their independence and enhance their quality of life.*

You can make a difference.  
To request Gatekeeper Program training for your agency, go to:  
**[www.co.washington.or.us/hhs/davs](http://www.co.washington.or.us/hhs/davs)**  
(click on Abuse & Adult Protective Services)

## **WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**

- **Communication**  
Confused, disoriented, forgetful, excessive reminiscing, angry or hostile.
- **Economic Condition**  
Extensive confusion concerning money matters, expressed difficulty in paying bills, or inability to afford transportation.
- **Social Condition**  
Older person or person with a disability living alone or otherwise isolated from social contact. Possible victim of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- **Emotional Health**  
Excessive statements of rejection, not eating or sleeping well, recent loss of spouse, relative, friend or pet. Appears extremely anxious, fidgety or withdrawn.
- **Personal Appearance**  
Unkempt, dirty clothes, uncombed hair or unshaven.
- **Physical Limitations**  
Severe difficulty in seeing, speaking, hearing or moving about.
- **Condition of Home**  
In need of repair, neglected yard, old newspapers lying about, offensive odors or unattended pets.

## The rewards are far-reaching.

The Gatekeeper Program has saved lives. It gives older people and those with disabilities a new lease on life by enabling them to maintain their dignity and independence. Its' rewards are even more far-reaching. Making this kind of commitment to help others builds employee job satisfaction and pride.

It has a highly positive impact on the community, and increases employee civic involvement, and can be put into action with very little time or money. No additional staff is needed, as it is accomplished by existing employees in the normal course of doing their jobs.

Employees can be trained as Gatekeepers in less than an hour. It teaches them the danger signs to look for and a telephone number to call for assistance.



Washington County Disability  
Aging & Veteran Services  
155 N First Ave. MS #44  
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**WASHINGTON COUNTY**  
OREGON

## GATEKEEPER PROGRAM

*Community Support  
for Older Adults and  
Persons with Disabilities*

**Washington County Disability,  
Aging & Veteran Services in  
partnership with Aging and  
People with Disabilities (APD)  
Department of Human Services  
(503) 846-3060**

[www.co.washington.or.us/hhs/davs](http://www.co.washington.or.us/hhs/davs)

Your Employees Can Help  
Open the Gates to Community  
Support for Older Adults and  
Persons with Disabilities