

## APS Training Recommendation

### Topic:

Statewide Adult Protective Services (APS) Training Budget: Implement a statewide APS training program through the new investment of \$8.2 million annually.

### Context

In 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an executive order affirming the priority of the health and well-being of older Californians and the need for policies that promote healthy aging. His order called for creation of a “blueprint” to prepare the state for the coming demographic changes and to continue California’s leadership in aging, disability, and equity. The resulting *Master Plan for Aging* identifies five bold goals and 23 strategies to build a “California for All Ages” by 2030. Adult Protective Services (APS) plays a key role in achieving the goals of the *Master Plan for Aging*; it is implicit in all of the Plan’s goals and is explicit in the following:

Goal Three: Inclusion & Equity, Not Isolation

#### *E. Protection from Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation*

Through new statewide coordinated efforts focused on prevention and equity, California can strengthen prevention and responses to elder abuse, neglect, exploitation, and fraud with person-centered, data-driven, and culturally competent approaches.<sup>1</sup>

### Problem Statement

The California Adult Protective Services system works 24/7 to protect and enhance the lives of elders and dependent adults. However, there is currently impermanent and unpredictable funding directed towards implementing and supporting the workforce development infrastructure needed to support the APS professionals who are charged with investigating reports of elder and dependent adult abuse in our state. Additionally, there is no mandate to train APS staff in California. The Regional Training Academies (RTAs) and individual county agencies are compelled to take responsibility for ensuring that APS professionals receive the workforce development services (including, but not limited to training) they need to investigate abuse and neglect toward elders and dependent adults. The lack of a statewide workforce development program and delivery system results in varied training opportunities based on geographic access, and often results in unequal knowledge and skills developed by APS professionals.

<sup>1</sup> <https://mpa.aging.ca.gov/Goals/3>

<sup>2</sup> [https://aging.ca.gov/Data\\_and\\_Reports/Facts\\_About\\_California's\\_Elderly/](https://aging.ca.gov/Data_and_Reports/Facts_About_California's_Elderly/)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.aging.ca.gov/download.ashx?IE0rcNUV0zYXf9JtT7jkAg%3d%3d>

<sup>4</sup> <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2016/3509/disability-long-term-outlook-112816.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.alz.org/media/documents/california-alzheimers-facts-figures-2018.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ppic.org/publication/planning-for-californias-growing-senior-population/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Budgets/2021%20APS%20overview.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202120220AB695](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB695)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cwda.org/press-release/budget-agreement-makes-historic-investments-most-vulnerable-californians-recovery-and>

<sup>10</sup> [https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/APS-LI-Managers-Flyer-and-Registration\\_2021.pdf](https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/APS-LI-Managers-Flyer-and-Registration_2021.pdf)

The complexity and number of cases received by APS programs is ever changing and increasing at an unprecedented rate, as evidenced by the following:

- The population over age 60 will increase 166 percent during the period from 2010 to 2060. More than half the counties will have over a 100 percent increase in this age group.<sup>2</sup>
- According to the *Master Plan for Aging*, elder abuse is estimated to impact 10% of older adults living at home and result in losses totaling billions of dollars annually.<sup>3</sup>
- Older Californians with disabilities (as defined by limitations in routine activities of daily living, such as dressing or bathing) will increase from 1 million in 2015 to 2.7 million in 2060; this represents a 160% growth in the population of seniors with disabilities.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2018 there were over 5 million Americans reported to be living with Alzheimer's, but it is anticipated that by 2050 that number will more than triple to 16 million, resulting in an increase in the cost of caring for those with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia increasing from \$277 billion to \$1.1 trillion.<sup>5</sup>
- The older adult population in 2030 will have more single and/or childless adults than it does today, suggesting an increased number of people living alone and being more likely to need either home health care or nursing home care.<sup>6</sup>
- APS cases have seen an increase in reports of abuse and neglect from FY 2011/2012 to 2019/2020 of 78,724 cases, an increase of 61.4%.<sup>7</sup>
- The passage of AB695 both expands the population served by APS and expands supports and services for elders:
  - Defines an "elder" as a person who is 60 years of age or older for the purposes of investigating or providing services under the APS program.
  - Aims to expand and enhance Adult Protective Services for older and dependent adults in California by increasing counties' capacity to provide case management and services.
  - Builds upon the successful Home Safe Program to assist Adult Protective Services clients who need help with housing issues.<sup>8</sup>

Just like a stable building requires a strong set of support beams, California needs a solid APS workforce development structure so that APS professionals can have the knowledge and skills necessary to serve and support older adults and adults with disabilities.

### **Workforce Development System Background**

Beginning with the establishment of APS as a 24/7 emergency response program in 1999, training for the APS program staff was funded each fiscal year with \$88,000 in general funds and \$88,000 in Title XIX matching funds, for a total of \$176,000, for the entire state. This level of funding only covered one day of training per year for each of California's APS professionals, including new hires who may have had no experience with the program, its regulations or the skills needed to deal with the myriad and complex problems of abuse and neglect of this vulnerable population.

In 2016, the Legislature recognized the need for increased training for APS and Public Guardian staff and authorized a one-time total expenditure of \$3 million State General Fund over three years for training for these two programs. This allocation was matched with the addition of approximately \$3 million

dollars of Title XIX monies. This combined funding allowed CDSS to contract with the Regional Training Academies from three California Universities and with the California Association of Public Administrators, Public Guardians, and Public Conservators (CA PA/PG/PC). This investment resulted in a greatly increased number of trainings, greater capacity for curriculum development, and the ability for APS professionals throughout California to complete the National Adult Protective Services (NAPSA) training certificate program and an annual conference for PA/PG/PC.

In 2019, the passage of AB 74 once again increased the one-time State General Fund investment in APS training to \$5.75 million over three years, providing funding to the Regional Training Academies through FY 2021/2022 to further increase delivery of APS core competency training, as well as to expand the delivery of specialized courses for APS Supervisors and Managers. In addition to AB 74 in 2019, California was granted one-time-only funding through a Federal APS Enhancement Grant by the Administration for Community Living (ACL). This funding was used to develop an APS Leaders Institute, which offered training for 200 Managers and Administrators. The APS Enhancement Grant also provided one-time-only funding for an MSW Stipend pilot program, which has had 10 MSW students participate with an expected graduation date of Spring 2021, after which time they will be required to be employed in a two-year payback requirement.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to expanding training courses and increasing their availability to APS professionals, a portion of these funds was also used to assemble a virtual APS Convening, where APS leaders, professionals and training partners from across the state were able to identify training content, delivery infrastructure and support needs. This four-part convening series set the stage for the “APS Training Blueprint” effort, which brought together 60 representatives from NAPSA, CDSS, RTA and counties to further examine and make recommendations for building and sustaining a robust APS training system that works for all of California.

## **Analysis**

### **1. The current funding is insufficient for all APS professionals in California to receive the essential instructor-led training necessary to provide adequate services.**

The funding provided in 2019 invested in essential advancements in APS training; however, it was one-time-only funding. The ongoing funding of \$70 Million in State General Fund was approved in June 2021 to support APS long-term case management for clients with extensive needs and highly vulnerable adults “who are aged 60 or over, instead of the current 65.”<sup>9</sup> With the exponential increase of vulnerable clients being served due to the decrease in the eligibility age and the complex services these clients will need, increased ongoing, predictable funding focused on the necessary training required by APS professionals is essential to building and sustaining the training infrastructure that is crucial to meet the workforce needs now and into the future. Currently, many rural counties have limited access to APS training and those that are long distances from their Regional Training Academy (RTA) or other common training sites are further restricted. Due to this hardship, counties are often left to their own devices to train their APS professionals, depending on their local budgets. The April 2021 Statewide Needs Assessment revealed that 55% of the 52 counties do not have a formal induction training program for new APS professionals; such training would provide them with consistent and measurable knowledge and skills required to meet the growing needs of a rapidly-expanding

client population. Without proper training, APS professionals are often left with inadequate knowledge and skills, resulting in increased worker burnout and a high rate of turnover among APS professionals. If we are to avoid these negative workforce issues, APS professionals must have comprehensive knowledge of services available to the vulnerable clients that are at risk for abuse, neglect or exploitation and the skills to work effectively with that population.

**2. There is currently no consistent statewide, core training delivery system for new APS professionals, resulting in insufficient training for APS professionals, which in turn may result in inadequate services to older adults, adults with disabilities and their families.**

There is no statewide, standardized core training delivery system for new APS professionals, which results in significant inconsistencies across the state. Currently, many counties use only the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) e-learning core curriculum modules to train their new APS professionals. While these trainings provide a basic and fundamental overview of the 23 APS core competencies, APS professionals reported (in the APS Convening, APS Blueprint meetings and the 2021 Statewide Needs Assessment) needing more comprehensive core training to prepare them to work with an increasingly complex and growing APS population. It was also reported that additional transfer of learning tools and coaching are needed in order to support retention of the information provided in the trainings. During the pandemic, Regional Training Academies held instructor-led virtual core trainings; however, the availability of virtual classroom training was still limited due to the lack of trainer resources across the state.

**3. There is limited ongoing/continuing training available for experienced APS professionals.**

The current funding that has been invested through the end of the 2021/2022 FY has helped enhance the availability of ongoing/continuing training available to experienced APS professionals. While training opportunities such as Scams and the Aging Brain, Financial Exploitation/Undue Influence, and Interviewing for Decision-Making Abilities remain limited, they have certainly benefited the APS professionals who were able to attend the trainings. Information received from APS professionals during the APS Convening, APS Blueprint meetings and through the 2021 Statewide Needs Assessment indicated the inadequacy of ongoing/continuing training for experienced APS professionals, both in content and availability. It is critical to make further investment in developing and increasing accessibility of ongoing/continuing training in order to reduce the inconsistency in knowledge and skills among experienced APS professionals.

**4. There is no consistent training database used by California Regional Training Academies to register and record attendance.**

Regional Training Academies have reported that there is no statewide training database that allows for centralized training registration, attendance tracking, and generation of state-required training reports. RTAs report needing to enter training information in more than one data system, which requires additional staff time, leaves room for error and often does not allow the trainees to have access to their complete training records. The creation of a statewide training system, to include a statewide Learning Management System, would allow all RTAs and counties to keep comprehensive records of training by learner, and could also serve as a

repository of all APS training resources, including training curricula, a list of available trainers available in each region and their area of expertise, relevant manuals and other written resources, as well as a statewide calendar of available training events.

**5. APS supervisors must be prepared to provide support and coaching to APS professionals on complex challenges faced in the APS field. A consistent, statewide Supervisor workforce development service delivery system is essential to achieving this goal.**

The APS field involves complex and traumatic cases that APS professionals and their clients must work through. APS supervisors play a critical role in preparing and supporting their staff in facing these multifaceted challenges. Unfortunately, APS supervisors currently have no consistent statewide workforce development service delivery system in place to provide them with the knowledge and skills needed to offer support and coaching to APS professionals on these complex challenges. Prior to the pandemic, the Regional Training Academies offered four in-person trainings for APS supervisors. While this series of supervisor trainings provided opportunities for greater knowledge and skill development, courses were not frequently offered and were delivered in-person, in a classroom setting, which limited accessibility for many supervisors in the state. Additionally, it was recognized that the competencies included in the APS supervisor training were inadequate for preparing APS supervisors for their critical and ever-evolving role in supporting APS professionals. In response, the NAPSA Education Committee, in partnership with California and Arizona, began efforts in 2020 to update the Supervisor Core Curriculum for APS to include a more thorough set of seven core competencies for APS supervisors. Work to complete this curriculum update will continue until FY 22/23; additionally, APS supervisor curriculum will require regular reviews to ensure that it stays up to date with the changing research, policy and practices of the APS field.

**6. APS leaders must be knowledgeable of the effects of federal and state guidelines, as well as research and best practices to help support the APS programs. A consistent, statewide APS leadership training system is essential to achieving this goal.**

APS is experiencing an unprecedented increase in changes to the APS field and client eligibility, with the rapidly increasing population of older adults, the passage of AB 695 decreasing the “elder” age to 60, and the vision laid out in the Governor’s *Master Plan for Aging*, which focuses on greater advocacy for the well-being of older Californians. These changes will result in a dramatic increase in the number of APS cases received, as well as a need for the APS system to provide more services and supports than ever before. There is currently no consistent statewide workforce development service delivery system in place to provide APS leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to guide APS programs and professionals in meeting these complex challenges and ongoing changes. Through the 2019 Federal APS Enhancement Grant by ACL, 200 managers and administrators were able to attend workshops focused on driving APS program improvements by examining and building upon federal and state APS guidelines, current research and best practices, partnerships and funding opportunities to enhance engagement and support of the APS programs.<sup>10</sup> Continuing a program to support APS leaders is essential during this critical, ever-changing time.

## Summary

The Adult Protective Services field is in the midst of undergoing many substantial events that will significantly impact the complexity of services and the number of vulnerable clients served. In addition to the already expanding population, which is expected to increase by 165 percent by 2060, recent legislation will increase the impact on the APS field even further. The passing of AB 695 expands eligibility of services from 65 years old to 60 years old in 2022, exponentially increasing the complexity of services needed and clients served. The Master Plan for Aging, creates a “blueprint” to prepare the state for the upcoming demographic changes and promotes new statewide coordinated efforts focused on prevention and equity to strengthen prevention and responses to elder abuse, neglect, exploitation, and fraud with a person-centered, data-driven, and culturally responsive approaches. A solid APS workforce development structure is essential to supporting the professionals charged with this critically-important work and to ensuring that they develop the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare them to serve this expanding, complex, and vulnerable population.

### Recommendations:

We must build and sustain a statewide APS workforce development delivery system for all levels of APS professionals throughout the state, to ensure comprehensive content and equitable access to workforce development services based on research and promising practices for professionals from all counties. Support for this system will consist of:

#### I. Authority and Support:

- **Funding to support a CDSS Associate Governmental Program Analyst at CDSS to assist with the Adult Protective Services workforce development system.**
- **Creation of an APS Workforce Development Advisory Committee.**
  - a) Completion of APS Core the APS Training should include representatives of CDSS, County APS program Regional representatives and RTA Directors or their designee.
  - b) The APS Training Advisory Committee should meet regularly, no less frequently than every quarter. Members should be clear about their roles, responsibilities and time commitment involved.
- **Establishment in regulation of a statewide mandate for APS training, including, but not limited to:**
  - a) Completion of APS Core Competency training, within the first twelve months of hire.
  - b) Completion of APS Supervisor Core Competency training, within the first twelve months of hire or appointment to APS.
  - c) Completion of a minimum of twenty hours of APS-related continuing professional development annually.

- **Funding to support the creation and maintenance of a statewide Learning Management System for APS that will:**
  - a) Serve as a registration and course completion database to ensure compliance for all APS mandated training.
  - b) Provide a platform for content repository and delivery.
  - c) Enable the use of evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of training.
  - d) Support counties and RTAs in tracking all APS training.
  
- **Funding to support and expand the current pilot of an MSW stipend program for APS professionals that will:**
  - a) Sustain existing programs (if funding to expand comes through).
  - b) Ensure development of a professional workforce with advanced knowledge in older adults, aging and disability related needs, health care, coordination of services, emerging needs of the aging population and effective interventions.
  - c) Ensure the development of leaders and policy makers who understand and are knowledgeable on the unique needs of the aging and disabled adult population to act as advocates for program development, funding and gaps in service needs.

## II. Content:

- **Consistent funding to continue to develop and implement a comprehensive core training program for all new California APS professionals, and to update curricula as needed to stay current with the emerging research, policies and practices of the APS field. This training program will enable new APS professionals to obtain the knowledge and skills they need to effectively investigate reports of elder and dependent adult abuse, neglect and exploitation and develop client centered, solution-focused service plans. This training program will consist of:**
  - a) APS Core Competency training via instructor-led (virtual or in-person) and/or eLearning.
  - b) Continuous expansion of APS Core Competency training-Developing new/more in-depth content, which enhances topics that were identified by APS professionals in the APS Training Blueprint Project, 2021 Statewide Training Needs Assessment, NAPSA Education Committee and the ACL APS Voluntary Guidelines, including, but not limited to:
    1. Mental Health
    2. Self-Neglect
    3. Screening for Decision-Making Ability
    4. Cognitive deficits, including dementia
    5. Risk Assessment
    6. Homelessness
    7. Vicarious Trauma/Self-Care for APS professionals
    8. Effective interviewing techniques
    9. Supported Decision-Making
    10. Emotional/psychological abuse

11. Public benefits eligibility
  12. Cultural Sensitivity/Racial and social equity
  13. Field Safety
  14. Investigating Financial Abuse
  15. Consistency in Determining Findings
- c) Development and expanded utilization of transfer of learning/coaching tools to assist new APS professionals and their APS supervisors with the application of knowledge and skills learned in training.
- **Consistent funding to continue to develop and implement an advanced/ongoing workforce development program for all California APS professionals, and to update curricula as needed to stay current with the emerging research, policy and practices of the APS field. This program will ensure all levels of APS professionals obtain the advanced and cutting-edge knowledge and skills they need to effectively investigate reports of elder and dependent adult abuse, neglect and exploitation and develop appropriate service plans. This program will consist of:**
    - a) Training on advanced/ongoing topic via instructor-led (virtual or in-person) and/or eLearning, including those that were identified by APS professionals in the APS Training Blueprint Project, 2021 Statewide Training Needs Assessment, NAPSA Education Committee and the ACL APS Voluntary Guidelines, including, but not limited to:
      - Housing insecurity/Homelessness
      - Dementia and Supported Decision Making
      - Substance Use
      - Cognitive Assessment Tools
      - Undue Influence
      - Consistency in Determining Findings
      - Financial Abuse/Estate Planning
      - Advanced Interviewing techniques(motivational, enhanced cognitive, intellectual and/or developmental disability and forensic)
      - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion/Transformation
    - b) Development and expansion of utilization of transfer of learning/coaching tools to further develop APS professionals and their APS supervisors with the application of advanced knowledge and skills learned in training.
    - c) Development and expansion of e-learning curriculum, as needed, to stay current with research, policies and practices.
  - **Consistent funding to continue to develop and implement a training program for all California APS Supervisors, and to update curricula as needed to stay current with the emerging research, policies and practices of the APS field. This workforce development program will provide APS Supervisors with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively perform their multifaceted role, as well as provide critical support to APS professionals on complex cases, including, but not limited to:**



- a) APS Supervisor Core Competency training via instructor-led (virtual or in-person) and/or eLearning, including, but not limited to:
    - Understanding Self as Supervisor
    - Diversity, Racial Equity and Inclusion/Transformation
    - Supporting Team Building and Individual Development
    - Case Consultation and Critical Thinking
    - Supervising for Accountability and Retention
    - Safety and Self Care
    - Collaboration and Leadership
  - b) Development and utilization of transfer or learning/coaching tools to provide supervisors opportunities to practice and use new skills and resources acquired during training.
  - c) Development and expansion of e-learning curriculum, as needed, to stay current with research, policies and practices.
- **Funding to continue implementing a leadership development program for all California Adult Services Administrators and APS Managers, and to update this program as needed to stay current with the emerging research, advocacy for changes to policy and implement evidence based or promising practices as the APS profession evolves and grows. This program enables APS leadership to identify current and critical issues relevant to the APS field and come together in a virtual, interactive training environment to learn, dialogue and plan. Needs assessment survey data informs training content and subject matter expert selection.**
  - **Expand and enhance the existing curriculum advisory committee structure for statewide curriculum development and revisions.**
    - a) The Curriculum Advisory Committee will operate under the auspices of the overall APS Workforce Development Advisory Committee.
    - b) The Curriculum Advisory Committee should include representatives of CDSS, CWDA, county and RTA trainers/staff development, and county APS professionals, with regional representation.
    - c) The Curriculum Advisory Committee should meet regularly, no less frequently than every quarter. Members should be clear about their roles, responsibilities and time commitment involved.

### III. Delivery and Infrastructure:

- **Consistent funding to continue to develop an APS Regional Training Academy delivery system that is effective, equitable, and available to APS professionals statewide, including:**
  - a) The opportunity for all *new* California APS professionals to benefit from:

- Access to instructor-led (either synchronous virtual or in-person) and/or eLearning APS Core Competency training within the first twelve months of hire.
  - Access to instructor-led training (either synchronous virtual or in-person) and/or eLearning including but not limited to topics identified by the Administration on Community Living: APS Voluntary Guidelines, the NAPSA Educational Committee, the APS Blueprint Project, and the 2021 Statewide Training Needs Assessment.
  - Access to e-learning curriculum
  - Access to county-specific induction training for APS professionals.
  - Transfer of learning/coaching tools to assist new APS professionals and their APS supervisors with the application of knowledge through the skills learned in training.
- b) The opportunity for **all** California APS Supervisors to benefit from:
- Access to the APS Core Competency training, within the first twelve months of hire, or appointment, if not completed previously.
  - Access to instructor-led (either synchronous virtual or in-person) and/or eLearning APS Supervisor CORE Competency training.
  - All new California APS Supervisors should complete NAPSA Core training within the first twelve months of hire or appointment to APS.
  - Transfer of learning/coaching tools to provide supervisors opportunities to practice and use new skills and resources acquired during training.
- c) The opportunity for all California APS professionals and Supervisors to benefit from ongoing workforce development opportunities, including:
- A minimum of twenty hours of instructor-led, advanced/ongoing APS training annually, either instructor-led (synchronous virtual or in-person) or via eLearning, to continue development of the skills and knowledge needed to be effective in their roles.
  - Transfer of learning/coaching tools to assist all APS professionals with applying knowledge and skills learned in training.
- d) The opportunity for all APS Leaders to benefit via instructor-led (synchronous virtual or in-person) or via eLearning APS Leadership Training.
- e) The opportunity to build a consortium of trainers with APS and other relevant subject-matter expertise to effectively deliver training statewide using multiple instructor-led modalities and transfer of learning/coaching tools.

- **Develop and fund a statewide APS training resource library that will serve as a repository of all APS workforce development resources available to RTAs and counties, including, but not limited to:**
  - a) Instructor-led and eLearning curriculum for APS Core Competency courses, advanced/ongoing APS courses, supervisor and APS Leadership courses.
  - b) Transfer of learning/coaching tools.
  - c) County-developed training courses/resources.
  - d) Directory of APS Trainers and their subject matter expertise (who they are, what they train, their geographic availability, etc.)
  - e) Relevant articles, research findings, open source publications and additional written resources.
  - f) Announcements of available training events, including a statewide training calendar.
  
- **Funding to expand and enhance statewide APS evaluation to measure the effectiveness of training.**