Legislative History: The "Tohono O'odham Adult Protection Ordinance," Ordinance No. 03-03, was enacted by Resolution No. 03-389 on September 11, 2003.
Tohono O'odham Adult Protection Ordinance

Section 1. Policy.

It is the policy of the Tohono O'odham Nation ("Nation") to protect all adult members of the Nation and to continue the traditional respect the members of the Nation have for tribal elders. Elders are valuable resources to the Nation because they are repositories and custodians of Tohono O'odham history, culture, and tradition and they are the best hope of the Nation to pass on tribal history, culture, language and tradition to the Nation's children. Thus, it is in the interest of and serves the welfare of the Nation to protect its adults and tribal elders from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other mistreatment.

Section 2. Purpose.

The purpose of the Tohono O'odham Adult Protection Ordinance is to protect vulnerable and incapacitated adults within the jurisdiction of the Tohono O'odham Nation from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The Ordinance shall be liberally interpreted in order to achieve this purpose. This Ordinance is not intended to affect, abolish or invalidate any existing civil or criminal law of the Tohono O'odham Nation, unless they are modified specifically by this Ordinance.

Section 3. Definitions: program goals.

A. These definitions shall be liberally construed so as to protect all incapacitated and vulnerable adults. In this Ordinance, unless the context otherwise requires:

1. "Abuse" means:
   (a) Assault, aggravated assault, threatening, or kidnapping as defined by the Tohono O'odham Criminal Code, Chapter 7, "Offense Against Persons."
   (b) Injury caused by negligent acts or omissions.
   (c) Abuse of a person or aggravated abuse of a person as defined by the Tohono O'odham Criminal Code, Chapter 8, "Offense Against the Family."
   (d) Sexual assault, sexual abuse, incest, indecent exposure, prostitution or soliciting for prostitution as defined by the Tohono O'odham Criminal Code, Chapter 9, "Sexual and Related Offenses."
   (e) Criminal Damage, theft, arson, robbery, or armed robbery as defined by the Tohono O'odham Criminal Code, Chapter 5, "Offenses Against Property."
   (f) Unreasonable confinement.
2. "Adult" or "Vulnerable adult" means an individual who is eighteen years of age or older who is unable to protect himself from abuse, neglect or exploitation because of a physical or mental impairment or infirmity.

3. "Adult Care Services" means an adult care unit under the Division of Senior Services.

4. "Caretaker" means
   (a) A person who is defined by tribal law or custom to provide services or resources to an adult.
   (b) A person who has voluntarily undertaken to provide care or resources to an adult;
   (c) An agency which provides or is required by tribal law or intergovernmental agreement to provide services or resources to an adult, including the duty to follow-up on placements, and any such institution or agency which receives anything of value in return for providing services or resources, or an employee of any such institution or agency.

5. "Court" means the Tohono O'odham Judicial Court.

6. "De facto conservator" means any person who takes possession of the home, money, other property or estate of an incapacitated or vulnerable adult without right or lawful authority. A de facto conservator is subject to the same responsibilities as a legally appointed conservator or trustee.

7. "De facto guardian" means a person who performs any function of an incapacitated or vulnerable adult's legal guardian without right or lawful authority or who has assumed a duty to provide care to the incapacitated or vulnerable adult. A de facto guardian is subject to the same responsibilities as legally appointed guardian.

8. "Department" means the Tohono O'odham Department of Human Services.

9. "Division" means the Tohono O'odham Department of Human Services, Division of Senior Services.

10. "Elder" for the purpose of this act means a person subject to the jurisdiction of the Tohono O'odham Nation and who is at least 55 years of age or older.

11. "Emergency" means a situation in which an adult is immediately at risk of death or injury.
12. "Exploitation" means the illegal or improper use of an incapacitated or vulnerable adult or the adult's resources for another's profit or advantage, including but not limited to offenses defined in the Criminal Code of the Tohono O'odham Nation, Chapter 5, "Offenses Against Property," or Chapter 10, "Offenses Involving Fraud and Related Offenses."

13. "Good Faith" means an honest belief or purpose and the lack of intent to do harm or defraud.

14. "Incapacity" means an impairment by reason of mental illness, mental deficiency, mental disorder, physical illness or disability, advanced age, chronic drug use, chronic intoxication or other cause to the extent that the person lacks sufficient understanding or capacity to make or communicate informed decisions concerning his person.

15. "Least Restrictive Alternative" means the approach allowing a vulnerable or incapacitated adult the most independence and freedom from intrusion, consistent with the adult's needs, by requiring that the least drastic intervention methods be used that will protect the adult from harm.

16. "Neglect" means a pattern of conduct by interfering with or failing to provide services or action resulting in deprivation of food, water, medication, medical services, shelter, cooling, heating or other services or basic needs necessary to maintain physical or mental health.

17. "Protective services" means specialized social services designed to prevent problems of abuse, exploitation or neglect of an incapacitated or vulnerable adult.

18. "Protective services worker" means a person who is employed by the Department to provide and/or coordinate protective services as defined in this Ordinance.

19. "Retaliation" means committing any of the following acts against a person reporting abuse, his or her family, or anyone cooperating with the investigation of the report; threatening in any way or causing bodily harm or termination or suspension from employment or reprimand by an employer, or damage to real or personal property.

B. Protective services programs shall seek to maintain the adult in a familiar environment by strengthening the adult's capacity for self-maintenance or by providing protective services.

C. Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed to mean that an adult is abused, neglected, exploited, or in need of protective services for the sole reason that the adult relies on treatment from a traditional or recognized religious method of healing in lieu of medical treatment.
Section 4. Protective services worker; powers, duties, and immunity.

A. A protective services worker shall:

1. Receive reports of incapacitated or vulnerable adults, who have been abused, exploited or neglected.

2. Receive oral or written information regarding an adult who may be in need of protective services from any source.

3. Upon receipt, document and forward such reports and/or information in writing to the Tohono O'odham Police Department within forty-eight (48) hours.

4. Make an evaluation to determine if the adult is in need of protective services and what services, if any, are needed.

5. Offer an adult in need of protective services, his guardian, and/or family whatever services appear appropriate in view of the evaluation.

6. File petitions as necessary for the appointment of a guardian or conservator or the appointment of a temporary guardian or temporary conservator or apply for a visitation warrant or protection order as provided for in Sections 8, 9, and 10 of this Ordinance.

B. A protective services worker may cooperate and share information with tribal, state, federal, and private agencies to achieve the purposes of this Ordinance.

C. A Senior Services Division employee shall not be appointed as guardian, conservator or temporary guardian.

D. A protective services worker employed by the Department and acting within the scope of his employment is immune from civil or criminal liability for applying in good faith for a visitation warrant, protection order, or for filing a petition for guardianship or conservatorship.

E. Any protective service worker or a person who in good faith reports suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an adult is immune from any civil or criminal suit based on that person’s actions or report. However, any protective services worker or person who knowingly makes or files a false report of suspected adult abuse is subject to civil and/or criminal liability under the laws of the Tohono O’odham Nation or a court of competent jurisdiction.
Section 5. Nonprivileged communication.

A. Except as provided in this section, the physician-patient privilege, husband-wife privilege or any privilege except the attorney-client privilege shall not apply in any civil or criminal litigation in which an incapacitated or vulnerable adult's exploitation, abuse or neglect is an issue nor in any judicial or administrative proceeding resulting from a report, information or records submitted or obtained pursuant to Section 6 nor in any investigation of an incapacitated or vulnerable adult's exploitation, abuse or neglect conducted by a law enforcement officer or a protective services worker.

B. In any civil or criminal litigation in which incapacitation, abuse, exploitation or neglect of an incapacitated or vulnerable adult is an issue, a clergyman or priest shall not, without his consent, be examined as a witness concerning any confession made to him in his role as a clergyman or a priest.

Section 6. Duty to report abuse, neglect or exploitation of incapacitated or vulnerable adults; Immunity of participants; Duty to make medical records available.

A. A family member, caretaker, physician, health care professional, social worker, law enforcement officer or other person who has reasonable cause to believe that an incapacitated or vulnerable adult has been abused, neglected, or exploited shall report or cause reports to be made orally or in writing of such reasonable basis to the Tohono O'odham Police Department or to a protective services worker within twenty-four (24) hours of discovery. If the person reporting is acting within the scope of his or her employment when making such a report, the initial report shall be followed by a written report mailed, faxed, or delivered within forty-eight hours (48) or on the next working day if the forty-eight hours expire on a weekend or holiday.

B. Any person making a complaint, furnishing a report, information or records required or authorized by this Ordinance or otherwise participating in the program authorized by this Ordinance or in a judicial or administrative proceeding or investigation resulting from reports, information or records submitted or obtained pursuant to this Ordinance is immune from any civil or criminal liability by reason of such good faith action, unless the person acted with malice or unless such person has been charged with or is under investigation for abusing, exploiting or neglecting the incapacitated or vulnerable adult in question.

C. Reports pursuant to subsection 6A shall contain:

1. The names, addresses and telephone number of both the adult and any persons having control or custody of the adult, if known, including the caretaker, and any witnesses.

2. The adult's age, location, and the nature and extent of incapacity or vulnerability.
3. The nature and extent of the injury, neglect or exploitation.

4. Description of alleged or prior abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

5. Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the adult's injuries, physical neglect or exploitation.

D. The person taking an oral report shall immediately complete a written report, indicating on the report the name of the reporter. A report may be made anonymously and it shall be investigated as required by this Ordinance.

E. A person having custody or control of legal, medical or financial records of an incapacitated or vulnerable adult for whom a report is required or authorized under this Ordinance shall make such records, or a copy of such records, available to any law enforcement officer or adult protective services worker investigating the incapacitated or vulnerable adult's neglect, exploitation or abuse upon written request signed by the law enforcement officer or adult protective services worker. Records disclosed pursuant to this subsection are confidential and shall be used only in a judicial or administrative proceeding or investigation resulting from a report required or authorized under this section.

F. If mental health records are requested pursuant to subsection E, the mental health service provider may remove the following information from the records before they are made available:

1. Personal information about individuals other than the patient.

2. Information regarding specific diagnosis or treatment of a psychiatric condition, if the attending psychiatrist certifies in writing that release of the information would be detrimental to the patient's health or treatment.

G. When any portion of a mental health record is removed pursuant to subsection 6F, a court, upon written motion of a prosecutor, law enforcement officer or adult protective services worker, may order the entire record or any portion of such record containing information relevant to the reported abuse, neglect, or exploitation be made available to the investigating law enforcement officer or adult protective services worker following appropriate notice and a hearing.

H. Offenses and violations.
1. No person shall fail to make a report or fail to make records available as required pursuant to this Section or prevent or attempt to prevent such a report from being made or shall make a report knowing it to be false or shall fail to provide records requested pursuant to subsection 6E, 6F or 6G.

2. No person shall intentionally interfere with an investigation of suspected adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

3. No person shall retaliate by any means against any person who has made a good faith report or who cooperates with an investigation of suspected adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

I. No person shall retaliate by any means against any person who has made a good faith report or who cooperates with an investigation of suspected adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

J. (A) A person who is found guilty of violating subsections 6H.1, 6H.2, or 6H.3, and is subject to the Nation’s criminal jurisdiction, shall be subject to incarceration for a maximum of 30 days and/or a maximum fine of $300.00 in addition to any equitable remedies otherwise identified in this Ordinance.

(B) A person not subject to the Nation’s jurisdiction, who is found responsible for violating subsection 6H.1, 6H.2, or 6H.3 and is not an enrolled member of the Nation, may be excluded in accordance with Ordinance No. 97-02, Removal and Exclusion of Non-Members.

(C) This Section shall be construed in a manner consistent with applicable tribal, state, and federal laws.

Section 7. Investigations: costs.

A. A law enforcement officer and protective services worker shall conduct a joint investigation into allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable or incapacitated adult. If reports or information required or authorized under this Ordinance are received by a law enforcement officer, he shall notify and make such information available to the Division within 48 hours.

B. A person required to receive reports and conduct investigations pursuant to this Ordinance may take or cause to be taken photographs of the abused adult and the vicinity involved. Medical examinations including radiological examinations of the involved adult may be performed. Accounts, inventories, or audits of the exploited adult's property may be performed.
C. The investigation report shall remain on file and not be destroyed for a minimum of five (5) years; even if it is determined there is insufficient evidence to pursue any legal action.

D. If any person is found guilty or responsible for the abuse, neglect or exploitation of an incapacitated or vulnerable adult in a criminal or civil action, the court may order the person to make restitution for the cost of such photographs, examinations, accounts, inventories or audits as the court deems appropriate in addition to any other remedies or penalties authorized by law.

Section 8. Adult Protection Visitation Warrant.

A. The law enforcement officer or protective services worker investigating allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable or incapacitated adult may petition the Tohono O'odham Judicial Court for an Adult Protection Visitation Warrant.

B. The Court may issue an Adult Protection Visitation Warrant upon showing probable cause of adult abuse, neglect or exploitation and that the law enforcement officer or protective services worker has been denied or has not had open access to the alleged vulnerable or incapacitated adult or the adult's residence. The Adult Protection Visitation Warrant is enforceable through contempt proceedings as provided under the laws of the Tohono O'odham Nation.

C. An Adult Protection Visitation Warrant shall only be served by a law enforcement officer. The warrant shall allow the law enforcement officer and protective services worker to enter the adult's residence, assess the adult's living conditions, and interview the adult without the family's, the caregiver's or the adult's consent. The purpose of the interview is to determine whether or not reasonable grounds exists to believe that the adult is incapacitated or has been subjected to abuse, neglect, or exploitation.


If, after investigation, the protective services worker or law enforcement officer has reasonable cause to believe an emergency exists, he or she shall act immediately and has authority to protect the adult, including by transporting the adult for medical treatment, placement in a group home or emergency shelter. Within seventy-two (72) hours of such action, the Division of Senior Services shall petition the Tohono O'odham Judicial Court for an Adult Protection Order as provided for in Section 10 of this Ordinance.

Section 10. Adult Protection Order.

A. The Department or any other person or party may petition the Court to hold a hearing for an Adult Protection Order. A copy of the petition shall be served upon the Division. This petition shall contain allegations that abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable
or incapacitated adult has occurred or that the vulnerable or incapacitated adult cannot adequately care for himself or herself or prevent being subject to abuse, neglect, or exploitation and facts necessary to invoke the jurisdiction of the court.

B. The Court may issue an Adult Protection Order after affording all parties the rights provided under applicable laws, including but not limited to the right to notice and the opportunity to appear at a hearing at which the evidence presented demonstrates by a preponderance of the evidence that the adult is incapacitated or vulnerable and that abuse, neglect or exploitation has occurred.

C. If the Court determines an adult is abused, neglected, exploited or incapacitated and cannot care for him or herself, the Court may issue an Adult Protection Order giving the Division authority to coordinate or provide appropriate protective services for the adult. Such services and court orders may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Removing the person or persons who have abused, neglected, or exploited an adult from the adult’s home;

2. Imposing reasonable restrictions, including permanent injunction, restraining the person or persons who have abused, neglected, or exploited an adult from committing such acts; and from engaging in the same type of endeavor or conduct;

3. Removing the adult from the abusive, neglectful, or exploitive situation for fourteen (14) days, unless an extension is made;

4. Requiring an adult’s family, caregiver(s), de facto conservator, or any other person with a fiduciary duty to the adult to account for the adult’s funds and property;

5. Requiring any person who has abused, neglected, or exploited a vulnerable or incapacitated adult to pay a fine not greater than $5,000.00 and restitution for any damages, which occurred as a result of that person’s wrongdoing;

6. In the event the Court determines the adult is incapable of taking care of him or herself or managing his or her property, appointing a conservator or guardian for the adult’s estate;

7. Naming a representative payee;

8. Requiring the Division to prepare a plan to deliver adult protection services, which provides the least restrictive alternatives for services, care treatment, or placement consistent with the adult’s needs;
9. Ordering the payment of actual and consequential damages, as well as punitive damages, costs of suit and reasonable attorney fees, to those persons injured by the conduct described in this section;

10. Ordering the payment for all costs and expenses of the prosecution and investigation of the civil and/or criminal conduct described in this Ordinance that are incurred by the Nation as appropriate; and

11. Ordering the exclusion of any person who is not an enrolled member in accordance with Ordinance No. 97-02, Removal and Exclusion of Non-Members.

D. An Adult Protection Order shall be issued for a period not to exceed six (6) months.

E. An Adult Protection Order may be extended as many times as necessary to protect the adult, but only after notice and opportunity for hearing is given and a determination is made based on clear and convincing evidence that such an order is necessary for the protection of the adult. Each extension shall be for a period not to exceed six (6) months.

F. The Court may refer the case to alternate dispute resolution in accordance with Tohono O'odham customs and traditions for resolution upon that court's establishment by the Legislative Council pursuant to the Constitution of the Tohono O'odham Nation, Article VIII, Section 1.

G. An Adult Protection Order may be set aside by the Court upon a petition of any party showing good cause following notice and a hearing.

Section 11. Rights of Adults, Their Families and Caretakers.

A. An adult, the adult's immediate family and caretaker shall be informed of a pending adult abuse investigation no later than seven days after the investigation begins.

B. An adult may refuse to accept adult protection services, even if there is good cause to believe the adult has been or is being abused, provided the adult is able to care for himself or herself and has the capacity to understand the nature of the services offered.

C. The adult's family or caretaker may refuse for themselves, but not for the adult, services offered pursuant to this Ordinance.

D. If an adult, the adult's family or caretaker who has an equal right to use or occupy the property refuses to allow an investigator into their home, the investigator shall inform the adult, the adult's family and caretaker of the right of the investigator to seek a warrant before seeking entry.
E. The law enforcement officer shall inform the adult’s family and caretaker of their rights as required pursuant to the Indian Civil Rights Act, whenever it appears the investigation may lead to criminal charges being filed.

F. The adult, adult’s family and caretaker shall be served pursuant to the Rules of the Court.

G. The adult, adult’s family and caretaker have the right to attend any proceeding pertaining to the determination of the adult’s capacity and the adult shall be present at all proceeding unless the tribal court determines the adult’s health would be at risk at such proceedings.

H. The adult, adult’s family and caretaker have the right to be represented by counsel at all proceedings at their own expense.

I. The adult, adult’s family and caretaker have the right to seek independent medical, psychological, or psychiatric evaluation of the adult at their own expense.

J. A person under investigation for or charged with (1) abusing, neglecting, or exploiting a vulnerable or incapacitated adult or (2) violating any provisions of this Ordinance shall not be entitled to the rights provided pursuant to Section 11 or any other section of this Ordinance. Notwithstanding this subsection, no person shall be denied any right afforded pursuant to the laws or Constitution of the Tohono O’odham Nation, the Indian Civil Rights Act, or other applicable law.

Section 12. Adult Abuse: penalties and civil remedies.

A. Adult Abuse. A person convicted of abusing, neglecting, or exploiting a vulnerable or incapacitated adult:

1. A person who is subject to the Tohono O’odham Nation’s criminal jurisdiction and is found guilty of abusing, neglecting, or exploiting a vulnerable or incapacitated adult shall be sentenced to a mandatory minimum term of six (6) months incarceration and a minimum $1,000.00 fine and shall not be eligible for suspension or commutation of sentence, probation, pardon or parole or release on any basis.

2. Any non-Indian found responsible for abusing neglecting, or exploiting a vulnerable or incapacitated adult shall be subject to the provisions of Section 10(C)11.

B. In any civil proceeding a person convicted in any criminal proceeding is precluded from subsequently denying essential allegations of the criminal offense of which he or she was convicted. For the purpose of this subsection, a conviction may result from a verdict or plea, including a plea of no contest.
C. A person who files a civil action for damages under this section shall serve notice and
one copy of the pleading on the Attorney General within thirty (30) days after the action
is filed with the Tohono O'odham Judicial Court. The notice shall identify the action, the
person and the person's attorney. Service of the notice does not limit or otherwise affect
the right of the Nation to maintain an action under this section or intervene in a pending
action nor does it authorize the person to name the Nation or the attorney general party to
the action.

D. The initiation of civil proceedings pursuant to this section shall be commenced within
three (3) years after actual discovery of the cause of action.

E. The standard of proof in civil actions brought pursuant to this section shall be the
preponderance of the evidence.

F. A civil action authorized by this section is remedial and not punitive and does not limit
and is not limited by any other civil remedy or criminal action or any other provision of
law. Civil remedies provided under this Ordinance are supplemental and not mutually
exclusive.

Section 13. Severability.

If any provision of this Ordinance or its applicability is held invalid the remaining provisions,
that can be implemented without the invalid provision, shall be given full force and effect. To
this extent, the provisions of this Ordinance are severable.


Nothing in this Ordinance shall be interpreted or construed as a waiver of the sovereign
immunity of the Tohono O'odham Nation.
RESOLUTION OF THE TOHONO O'ODHAM LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
(Adopting the Tohono O'odham Adult Protection Ordinance)

RESOLUTION NO. 03-389

WHEREAS, the Legislative Council is vested with the authority “[t]o exercise the inherent powers of the Tohono O’odham Nation by providing laws, ordinances, and resolutions … (2) to promote, protect, and provide for public health, peace, morals, education and general welfare of the Tohono O’odham Nation and its members” (Article VI, Section 1(c)(2), of the Constitution of the Tohono O’odham Nation); and

WHEREAS, the Senior Services Division of the Nation’s Department of Human Services has reported that the Nation’s elders and incapacitated adults are experiencing various forms of abuse, neglect and financial exploitation; and

WHEREAS, such abuse, neglect and financial exploitation is contrary to the traditions and values of the Tohono O’odham; and

WHEREAS, the Tohono O’odham Nation does not have an Adult Protection Ordinance to protect its elders or incapacitated adults from abuse, neglect and financial exploitation; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution 01-470 the Legislative Council established a taskforce to draft a Tohono O’odham Adult Protection Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the taskforce has developed the Tohono O'odham Adult Protection Ordinance and has held public hearings; and

WHEREAS, it is in the Nation's best interest to enact the Tohono O'odham Adult Protection Ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tohono O'odham Legislative Council that the Tohono O'odham Adult Protection Ordinance, in the form attached hereto, is hereby enacted as an ordinance of the Tohono O'odham Nation and shall be designated Ordinance No. 03-03.

The foregoing Resolution was passed by the Tohono O'odham Legislative Council on the 09th Day of SEPTEMBER, 2003 at a meeting at which a quorum was present with a vote of 2,629.7 FOR; -0- AGAINST; -0- NOT VOTING; and [0] ABSENT, pursuant to the powers vested in the Council by Section 1 (c)(1) and (2) of Article VI of the Constitution of the Tohono O’odham Nation, adopted by the Tohono O’odham Nation on January 18, 1986; and approved by the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs (Operations) on March 6, 1986, pursuant to Section 16 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984).

TOHONO O'ODHAM LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Dennis Ramon, Chairman

10th day of September, 2003
RESOLUTION NO. 03-389
(Adopting the Tohono O’odham Adult Protection Ordinance)
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ATTEST:

Vivian Hedrington, Legislative Secretary

09 day of September, 2003.

Said Resolution was submitted for approval to the office of the Chairman of the Tohono O’odham Nation on the 10th day of September, 2003 at 5:07 o'clock, P.M., pursuant to the provisions of Section 5 of Article VII of the Constitution and will become effective upon his approval or upon his failure to either approve or disapprove it within 48 hours of submittal.

TOHONO O’ODHAM LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

[ ] APPROVED

on the 14th day of September, 2003

[ ] DISAPPROVED

at 5:50 o'clock, P.M.

VIVIAN JUAN-SAUNDERS, CHAIRWOMAN
TOHONO O‘ODHAM NATION

Returned to the Legislative Secretary on the 11th day of
September, 2003, at 4:38 o’clock, P.M.

Vivian Hedrington, Legislative Secretary