Situations involving hoarding, abuse and neglect, and other special community needs require a collaborative approach of participating municipal departments and community agencies. Many communities have establishedmulti-disciplinary community task forces who meet regularly to address these situations. It is important for the Public Health Nurse to have a participating role on the task force.

The task force establishes the protocol for a community to follow when there is suspect hoarding or other unsafe living conditions identified. This may involve the municipal Police, Fire, Health, Human Services departments, Council on Aging and/or Veterans’ Services; and other community agencies, e.g., area Elder Service agencies, Protective Services, Salvation Army, etc.

1. **Hoarding**
2. **Abuse and Neglect**
3. **Other Community Needs**
4. **HOARDING**

**A free online training on Hoarding Guidelines is available through the Local Public Health Institute (LPHI):**

[**Hoarding | Local Public Health Institute of Massachusetts (bu.edu)**](https://sites.bu.edu/masslocalinstitute/2012/07/31/hoarding/)

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| **Hoarding Resources** | * [Hoarding Resources/ Mass Housing](https://www.masshousing.com/hoarding) * [Hoarding/ Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/hoarding) |

1. **ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

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| **Abuse & Neglect Resources** | * [Elder Abuse & Neglect | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/reporting-elder-abuse-neglect) * [Child Abuse and Neglect | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/child-abuse-and-neglect) * [Disabled Persons Protection Commission | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/orgs/disabled-persons-protection-commission) |

PHNs are mandated reporters. If you know or suspect that someone is being abused or neglected, **it is mandatory** to file a written report within 48 hours of calling in a report.

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| **PROTECTIVE SERVICES** | **AGENCY** | **CONTACT** | **REPORTS/REFERRALS** |
| For Elders 60 and older | Executive Office of Elder Affairs | HOTLINE: 800-922-2275 (available 24/7) | [Elder Abuse Mandated Reporter Form / mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/doc/elder-abuse-mandated-reporter-form/download) |
| For Children under 18 | Department of Children & Families (DCF) | Immediately contact your DCF Area Office: [Cities and Towns by DCF Area Office](https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2020/01/16/Cities%20and%20Towns%20by%20Area%20Office%20-%20updated%202.6.17%20%289%29.pdf)  HOTLINE: 800-792-5200 (If nights, weekends, and holidays) | [Child Abuse and Neglect | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/child-abuse-and-neglect) |
| For the Disabled | Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC) | HOTLINE: 800-426-9009 | [Disabled Mandated Report Form](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/reporting-forms) |

1. **OTHER COMMUNITY NEEDS**

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| **Other Community Need Resources** | * [Executive Office of Health and Human Services | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/orgs/executive-office-of-health-and-human-services) * [Essential PH Services / phnci.org](https://phnci.org/uploads/resource-files/EPHS-OnePager-English.pdf) |

Other community needs are those that may not fall into the categories of hoarding, abuse or neglect. Some of your most vulnerable children, youth, adults, and elders nevertheless may require the assessment and intervention skills of the municipal PHN. Again, the collaborative approach of a multi-disciplinary community task force is important in identifying these needs. Examples of special community needs may include:

* Families experiencing the challenges of opioid addiction or overdose of their loved ones
* Those who have difficulty securing access to and receiving health care due to transgender or racial challenges
* Those experiencing food insecurity