

## Vulnerable Adult Act Redesign Phase I

This bill is Phase I of a two-phase project to modernize this critical protection law.

- The Vulnerable Adult Act hasn't been updated in over 40 years.
  - The statute protects both older adults and people with disabilities living at home.
  - A VAA Re-design group consisting of more than 260 stakeholders worked to get input on how to develop a more person-centered and equity-based adult protection system.
- This bill aligns the investigation data classification with the classification of other investigative data in current law during county adult protection maltreatment investigations.
  - This update clarifies adult protection (APS) investigation data from "private" to "confidential" data while the investigation is open. Investigative data in the welfare system is already confidential per Chapter 13.
  - This change will provide clarity and will make it much easier for counties to protect the maltreatment investigation process until findings can be made and the investigation is completed.
- The law is currently inconsistently applied, investigated and adjudicated across the 87 counties. This bill adds that counties must make their guidelines for accepting maltreatment reports available to the public. This will:
  - Add consistency and transparency so families know which allegations of maltreatment meet a county's threshold for investigation.
  - Updates also help vulnerable adults and families understand why some reports are 'screened out' and not investigated.

### Amendment

- There is some confusion for counties on their ability to share data. This amendment clarifies the data sharing authorities that apply and already exist under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13.
  - This clarification will help counties in their dual roles for investigation and for services by explicitly acknowledging the county's ability to coordinate and share data with a case management agency and/or tribes when supporting a vulnerable adult's health, safety, or comfort, or to prevent, stop or remediate maltreatment.
- The current focus of the VAA is often the investigation when suspected maltreatment is reported.
  - This amendment provides some improvements for family caregivers by emphasizing connecting individuals to services and families getting help and connected to services, rather the investigations.