

Senators Gelser and Olsen -

During the hearing yesterday on HB 3323, there seemed to be two outstanding questions, both of which we've tried to answer below.

First, how many cases does Multnomah County expect to pursue annually if given the authority to pursue civil action against those who abuse elders or those with disabilities?

We estimate we would pursue 6 to 10 cases annually.

Second, what is the breadth of DHS, DOJ and the DA's authority that would be extended to Multnomah County's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) if this bill were to pass, and how would the county work with these other entities on these cases?

Under current law, the DA, DOJ, and DHS all have authority to bring a civil claim for penalties up to \$25,000 against a person who physically or financially abuses a vulnerable person. This authority is shared by them all so there is a need for them to coordinate their efforts in relation to civil claims and in relation to any criminal claims that the DA might bring. These practical considerations are dealt with on a regular basis among government agencies with enforcement authority.

As an example of how this coordination will work, we have already reached out to Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill and we have agreed that his office and our agency will enter into an Memorandum of Understanding to detail how the cases will be coordinated. Our attorney has also spoken with Ellen Klem at DOJ and had a similar conversation with her. The bottom line is that if the county's AAA is authorized to file one of these cases, it will be done with the approval and coordination with our law enforcement partners.

Please let me know if these questions and answers match up with what you're looking for. We're happy to provide more information if need be.

--

Chris Fick
Deputy Director of Government Relations
Multnomah County
443-564-3402 - cell
503-988-7047 - office
chris.fick@multco.us