

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 991 (Menjivar) – As Amended May 14, 2026

Policy Committee:	Aging and Long Term Care	Vote:	7 - 0
	Human Services		7 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), when it substantiates a violation in a residential care facility for the elderly (RCFE) that constitutes abuse, to categorize and cite the violation and ensure the categorized violations are listed on a public-facing database maintained by CDSS.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Beginning July 1, 2027, requires CDSS, when it substantiates a violation in an RCFE that constitutes abuse, as defined in the RCFE residents' bill of rights, to categorize the type of abuse using the definitions from the Elder Abuse and Dependent Adult Civil Protection Act and cite the violation according to the specific type of abuse that has been substantiated.
- 2) Requires CDSS to categorize and cite violations as one or more of the following: physical abuse; abandonment; abduction; financial abuse; isolation; mental suffering; neglect; or undue influence, as those terms are defined in existing law.
- 3) Provides that this categorization of violations does not limit CDSS's ability to assess civil penalties, does not require CDSS to assess a civil penalty where none is otherwise authorized, and does not require CDSS to alter the elements required to substantiate abuse under existing law.
- 4) Requires CDSS to ensure the categorized citations are reflected in any public-facing transparency, licensing, or enforcement databases maintained by the department.

FISCAL EFFECT:

CDSS estimates ongoing General Fund costs of approximately \$1.53 million in the first year and \$1.31 million annually ongoing for additional staff to meet the requirements of the bill. These positions include one manager and five analysts to oversee and support implementation and to address complaints and implement newly established procedures, including training and technical assistance to licensees, as well as one IT specialist to review and guide security for necessary system changes and one limited-term analyst to ensure implementation integrates into existing planned and current website changes.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Currently, the way that elder and dependent adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation are categorized by CDSS is very broadly as a violation of residents' rights rather than by the specific type of abuse found to have occurred. This umbrella category obscures how often specific forms of abuse (physical, financial, etc.) occur in RCFEs. This limits the usefulness of the data and doesn't give us an accurate depiction to inform our approach as a state to this vulnerable population. It also diminishes the experience of victims reporting these incidents and confuses consumers who are seeking information about which facilities have been found to abuse their residents. [This bill] will ensure that we are promoting consumer transparency and accountability in RCFEs by improving how substantiated reports of abuse and neglect are categorized by CDSS and their public facing licensing and enforcement databases.

This bill is sponsored by the California Long-term Care Ombudsman Association and supported by a broad coalition of older adult and aging advocacy organizations. There is no known opposition.

- 2) **Background.** RCFEs are residential facilities that provide 24-hour nonmedical care and supervision for persons 60 years of age or older. RCFEs provide housing, housekeeping, supervision, and personal care assistance with activities of daily living to individuals who are unable to live by themselves, but who do not need 24-hour nursing care. RCFEs range in size from small facilities operating out of single-family homes to larger buildings that house over 100 residents. Most facilities have six or fewer beds.

RCFE Violations. CDSS licenses RCFEs and conducts regular inspections of the facilities to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Violations can result in citations, fines and, in extreme cases, loss of a license to operate a facility. In addition, anyone may file a complaint about abuse, neglect, poor care, or eviction issues, among other things. CDSS must begin an investigation within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint. Investigation length can vary greatly depending on the severity of the case.

The RCFE Residents' Bill of Rights is intended to promote dignity, autonomy, safety, and quality of life. The rights range significantly, and violations of these rights can also vary significantly. Following an investigation, when CDSS substantiates abuse in an RCFE, violations are categorized as resident rights violations (*i.e.* the right to be free from abuse) rather than identified as abuse, including the specific type of abuse established by the evidence. As a result, public licensing and enforcement databases do not reflect how often abuse occurs or the specific types of abuse that occur in RCFEs.

The author and sponsor assert that "violation of residents' rights" is a catch-all phrase when issuing citations to RCFEs and masks whether a facility, for example, interfered with religious rights, stole possessions, or abused a resident. They further assert the lack of specificity limits transparency for consumers and families, reduces the usefulness of enforcement data for policymakers and regulators, and impedes efforts to identify patterns of harm and prevent future abuse.

This bill requires CDSS to specifically categorize and make publicly available resident rights violations.

Master Plan for Aging (MPA). California's senior population is growing faster than any other age group. By 2030, over 25% of the population in California will be 60 and older. In January of 2021, the Governor released his MPA, which prioritizes the health and well-being of older Californians and the need for policies that promote healthy aging. This bill advances the goals of the MPA regarding the needs and wellbeing of older Californians.

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