

## For Immediate Release

13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Administrative Office of the Court  
Elder Justice Center  
Announces World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2011  
Contact: [elder@fljud13.org](mailto:elder@fljud13.org)  
(813)276-2726



## Court Recognizes World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2011

**TAMPA** – Judge Manuel Menendez, Chief Judge of the 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Florida, is joining the Elder Justice Center (EJC), one of the Administrative Office of the Court's programs, in recognizing **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)** on **Wednesday, June 15, 2011**. Communities and municipalities throughout the world will make proclamations declaring **June 15, 2011** as **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)** and hold events designed to raise their communities' awareness of elder abuse. The first Awareness Day in 2006 involved several hundred organizations and governmental bodies at international, national, regional, local, community and neighborhood levels, in every continent in the world. The day is in support of the United Nations International Plan of Action which recognizes the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue. Governments, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, religious groups, professionals in the field of aging, interested individuals as well as older persons themselves will promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older persons by organizing activities around the world to raise awareness of the cultural, social, economic and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect.

Throughout the world, abuse and neglect of older persons is largely under-recognized or treated as an unspoken problem. Unfortunately, no community or country in the world is immune from this costly, public health and human rights crisis. Research indicates that public education campaigns like **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)** are vital for informing people in a growing number of countries about elder abuse and active involvement of the media is central to its success.

Chief Judge Menendez is issuing a Resolution proclaiming June 15, 2011, as Elder Abuse Awareness Day in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. The Elder Justice Center will be greeting visitors in the lobby of the George Edgecomb Courthouse on that day, to share information about elder abuse and neglect and to hand out purple Elder Abuse Awareness ribbons to be worn in order to raise awareness about this important community issue. The Courthouse is located at 800 E. Twiggs Street, in downtown Tampa. Staff will also distribute an Elder Abuse Fact Sheet and information about an upcoming training on the subject that will open to the public. Please show the world you care about ending elder abuse and neglect by wearing something purple on June 15, 2011. If you don't take a stand, who will?

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The Elder Justice Center was founded in October 1999 and its general mission is to remove barriers and enhance the linkages between seniors and the court system, as well as social and legal services. The specific goals of the Elder Justice Center are to:

- To provide a designated facility to respond to the needs of the seniors in the community – including information and referrals.
- To provide public education to the elderly and those who work with them.
- To coordinate access to existing agencies that presently provide services to seniors and provide case management services as needed (non-court case connected case management for elder non-victims).
- To provide case management/victim services to victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation (court case connected case management for elder victims).
- To provide case management and monitoring services in guardianship cases (for wards of the court).

As part of this mission, the Elder Justice Center engages in both public education programs to older adults and their families, referral of older adults having contact with the judicial system to social service agencies, and the supervision and case management of wards adjudicated incapacitated in the 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.

For more information, please visit our website at: [www.fljud13.org](http://www.fljud13.org), navigating to Court Programs and then to the Elder Justice Center.