**Contra Costa County Elder Death Review Team (EDRT) Member Roles**

**District Attorney/Criminal Prosecutor**
Prosecutors educate the team on criminal law and provide information about criminal actions taken against those involved in the elder fatalities reviewed. They also provide the team with explanations regarding when a case can or cannot be pursued and information about previous contacts with family members and criminal prosecutions of suspects in an elder death.

**Law Enforcement**
Law enforcement members provide information on criminal investigations of elder deaths reviewed by the team. They also check the criminal histories of the adult and/or family members and suspects in the elder death cases. To ensure sufficient representation, both the sheriff’s department and the police department are needed as team members. The law enforcement team members act as liaisons between the team and other local law enforcement departments. They assist with persuading officers from other agencies to participate in reviews when there is a death in that jurisdiction. Law enforcement officers are usually the best-trained team members on scene investigations and interrogations, essential skills required in determining how an elder died. Their expertise provides useful information and training to other members.

**Coroner/Medical Examiner**
When reviewing a suspicious death, the medical examiner provides the team with copies of preliminary scene investigation forms, information regarding how the determination of cause and manner of death was reached, and a copy of the full autopsy report when available. The medical examiner also assists the team because of their access to records from the other investigating agencies and because of their ongoing working relationship with law enforcement, EMS, hospitals, and APS.

**Public Health Professional**
Public health agencies facilitate and coordinate preventive services needed to assist the community with education and community awareness programs. Public health members provide the team with vital records, epidemiological profiles of families for early risk detection, and help educate members on the public health services available in the county. Public health doctors or nurses help identify public health issues that arise in adult deaths and also provide medical explanations to the team. If the adult was treated in a local public health facility, they can provide medical histories and explanations of previous treatment.

**Adult Protective Services (APS) & Long Term Care Ombudsman**
The APS/Ombudsman member has the legal authority and responsibility to investigate and provide protection to elders and vulnerable adults that might be at risk. As a team member, they provide detailed information on the family and the worker’s investigation into the abuse and neglect that may have occurred within the home or facility. Members also have prior agency contact information including 1) reports of neglect or abuse and 2) Services previously or currently being provided to the family. They may be able to provide the team with information regarding the family’s history and the psychosocial factors that influence family dynamics such as unemployment, divorce, previous deaths, history of domestic violence,
Elder Death Review Team (EDRT) Member Roles

history of drug abuse, and previous abuse or neglect. Their knowledge on issues related to elder abuse and neglect cases is essential to an effective team.

**Mental Health Services Provider**
The mental health representative provides information and insight regarding psychological issues related to the adult, the family, the perpetrator, and the event that caused the elders’ death. They make suggestions when counseling or other mental health service referrals may be appropriate.

**A Representative of Family Violence Shelter/Center**
A Family Violence Center representative provides information and insight regarding the elder, family, or perpetrator’s request for or use of services offered by the agency. The representative from the agency checks the agencies records for use of services including hotline services, shelter services, non-residential services, transitional services, or other services that the client may have requested. The information they provide to the team includes dates of service, length of service, types of service offered, and termination of agency services.

**Victim Witness Advocate**
A representative from the County District Attorney’s Office Victim Witness Program provides information and insight regarding Crime Victims Compensation requested and/or received by the complainant and interaction the complainant had with their program.

**Medical forensics specialist**
The medical forensics specialist provides expert information on scene investigations that may help in determining elder abuse or neglect.

**Medical Specialist**
A Geriatrician/MD or Geriatric Nurse Practitioner/NP provides invaluable information on the complexities surrounding the medical treatment of cases reviewed. They will be able to identify subtle signs that may indicate foul play.