

You Have Options

Newborns up to three days old can be safely surrender to any hospital emergency room or other safe haven site in Santa Clara County.

1. What is the Safely Surrendered Baby Law?

The Law provides that any parent or person having legal custody of a child 72 hours old or younger may anonymously surrender the child to any designated Safely Surrendered site, without fear of prosecution provided that there is no evidence of child abuse or neglect. This law allows for a 14 day grace period, which begins the day the child is voluntarily surrendered. During this period, the person who surrendered the child can return to the Safely Surrendered site to reclaim the child.

2. How does it work?

A parent who is unable or willing to care for an infant can legally and confidentially surrender their baby within 3 days of birth. Babies may be surrendered to any public or private hospital emergency room in California. A bracelet will be placed on the baby for identification and a matching bracelet will be given to the parent. The bracelet will help identify the child if the parent changes their mind during the grace period. A baby can be safely surrendered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

3. What happens to the baby?

Safely surrendered babies are given a medical exam and placed in a foster home or pre-adoptive home.

4. Does a parent have to give any information to the people taking the baby?

No. Nothing is required. Hospital personnel will give the parent an anonymous medical information questionnaire designed to gather family medical history, which would be useful in caring for the child. It is up to the parent if they wish to give any additional information concerning the baby.

5. What happens to the parent?

Parents who safely surrender their baby may leave the hospital emergency room without fear of arrest or prosecution for child abandonment. Their identity will remain confidential and they will have the comfort of knowing their baby will remain in safe hands.

6. Who can I contact for more information?

If you or someone you now wants to surrender a baby, please take the child to any hospital emergency room. Remember, You Have Options. For more information about the Safely Surrendered Baby Law, please visit our web site at <http://www.sccgov.org>.

For more information on the Safely Surrendered Baby Law call (408) 975-5117.

