

# SAFE HAVEN BEST PRACTICES FOR PROVIDERS

**1-888-510-2229 24/7, Confidential Safe Haven Hotline**

## **SAFE HAVEN LAWS**

Safe Haven laws allow a parent to safely and confidentially relinquish their unharmed infant, up to a certain day of age, to a staff member at a designated Safe Haven location, or utilize an infant safety device at a designated location, if available, without fear of criminal prosecution. Every state has a unique, Safe Haven law and these laws differ on details such as the maximum age an infant may be relinquished, approved designated Safe Haven locations, and specific procedures to follow. Hospitals and attended emergency medical services, (EMS), agencies are designated Safe Haven locations in most states.

Additionally, Safe Haven laws provide hospital and emergency medical services personnel criminal and civil immunity for injury or other damages to the infant unless such injury or other damage to the infant resulted from gross negligence or willful misconduct by such personnel.

## **BEST PRACTICES FOR SAFE HAVEN PROVIDERS**

### **ATTENDED EMS STAFF**

- Voluntarily accept physical custody of the infant under the Safe Haven law.
- Request the relinquishing mother/parent to provide medical information and any other important facts about the infant. **Note: If the parent declines this request, a Safe Haven provider cannot compel the parent to provide this information.**
- Provide any immediate medical care the infant may require and arrange to have the infant transported to the nearest hospital. Offer the mother medical evaluation and transport to the hospital.
- Before arrival, notify hospital staff that the infant has been surrendered under the Safe Haven law. If the mother is transported to the hospital, the mother and infant will be admitted separately. Hospital staff will contact the Department of Child and Family Services or the Department of Social Services to inform them.
- Provide the mother/parent with the NSHA Crisis Hotline, 1-888-510-BABY, for after-care and counseling resources, if needed.
- If the relinquishing parent contacts you regarding reclaiming custody of the infant, please direct the parent to contact the Department of Social Services to initiate this process and discuss options.
- If you have any questions or for information regarding training for your staff, please contact the Safe Haven hotline at 1-888-510-2229.

### **HOSPITAL STAFF**

- Offer support and safe options to the mother/parent in crisis. Facilitate conversation around the safe options of temporary or family placement, adoption, and Safe Haven

relinquishment. Contact an adoption agency if necessary and/or contact the National Safe Haven Alliance (NSHA) at 1-888-510-BABY (2229) to assist with this step.

- If private adoption is not desired and the mother/parent chooses to relinquish using the Safe Haven law, accept physical custody of the infant. If the relinquishment request is made after delivery, call the NSHA Crisis hotline for direction: 1-888-510-BABY.
- Request the relinquishing parent to provide medical information and any other important facts about the infant. **Note: If the parent declines this request, a Safe Haven provider cannot compel the parent to provide this information.**
- Admit the infant using confidential registration under hospital policy and provide medical care that the infant may require. Call NSHA hotline for direction, 1-888-510-BABY.
- Contact the Department of Child and Family Services or the Department of Social Services to inform them that an infant has been surrendered.
- If the relinquishing parent contacts you regarding reclaiming custody of the infant, please direct the parent to contact the Department of Social Services to initiate this process and discuss options.
- If you have any questions or for information regarding training, please contact the Safe Haven hotline at 1-888-510-2229.

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**[www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org](http://www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org)**

