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CHILD PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY
DEPT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
PO BOX 717
TRENTON NJ 08625-9921

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UNITED STATES

Safe Haven

- Allows a distressed parent to give up an unwanted infant safely, legally and confidentially
- Protects the parent from arrest or prosecution for abandonment
- Requires no names or records
- Permits babies up to 30 days old to be given up at any hospital emergency room or police station in New Jersey
- Makes medical treatment and social services available to the birth mother - confinentially
- Puts the child into the custody of Child Protection and Permanency, which places the infant in a foster or pre-adoptive home

Certainly we would prefer that women call us while they are pregnant, not after giving birth, so we can provide proper medical care and counseling. But at the same time, we want to assure parents who choose not to keep their children that they will not go to jail if they deliver their babies to safe hands in a hospital emergency room or police station.

In New Jersey, no one ever has to abandon a child again.

Safe Haven Hotline: 1-877-839-2339

These Numbers Can Also Help:

211
www.nj211.org
Call 211 to connect with various social service agencies in your community.

Parents Anonymous of NJ
Family Helpline
1-800-THE KIDS

Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-572-SAFE

Child Abuse Hotline
1-877-NJ ABUSE

NJ Department of Children and Families

NJ Safe Haven Infant Protection Act

no shame.
no blame.
no names.

there's a safe haven
for unwanted infants

www.njsafehaven.org
1-877-839-2339

What is Safe Haven?

It's a law: the New Jersey Safe Haven Infant Protection Act. Under this law a person may give up an unwanted infant anonymously. As long as the baby has not been abused, the person may do so without fear of arrest or prosecution.

Why does New Jersey do this?

The purpose of Safe Haven is to protect unwanted babies from being hurt or killed from unsafe abandonment.

Abandoning a baby puts the infant in extreme danger. Too often, it results in the baby's death. It is also illegal, with severe consequences. But with Safe haven, this tragedy doesn't have to happen ever in New Jersey.

How does it work?

A distressed parent who is unable to care for an infant can give up custody of a baby less than 30 days old safely, legally and anonymously. All that is required is that the baby be brought to a hospital emergency room or police station in New Jersey. As long as the child shows no signs of intentional abuse, no name or other information is required.

Can only a parent bring in the baby?

No. The parent may choose to have someone else bring in the infant. It can be a family member, a friend, a clergy member, a social worker - practically anyone.

Do you have to call before bringing in the baby?

No. You can walk in anytime.

Can you help a parent decide where to bring the baby?

Yes. The parent can call the Safe Haven Hotline - 1-877-839-2339 - and get the address and directions for any hospital or police station in the state.

Does a parent have to tell anything to the people taking the baby?

No. Nothing is required. However, hospital personnel or police will record any information that a parent is willing to share, such as the child's health, race, date of birth, place of birth or medical history of the parents. This could be very useful in caring for the child. These questions can be answered anonymously on a medical questionnaire that is available at the police station or hospital.

What happens if a woman voluntarily provides her personal identifying information to hospital staff while delivering her baby at the hospital or being admitted?

If a woman voluntarily provides her personal identifying information to hospital staff while delivering her baby or being admitted, her anonymity will no longer be protected under the New Jersey Safe Haven Law and the State will have the mandate to search for and contact the infant's father and/or relatives.

What happens to the mother when she drops off a baby?

If the mother brings in the baby, she will be offered medical treatment and social services. She can, of course, refuse if she wishes. Once she has safely turned over the baby, she is free to go. She can complete an anonymous medical questionnaire and drop it in any mailbox.

What happens to the baby once the baby is dropped off?

The child will be examined and given medical treatment, if needed. Then Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) will immediately take custody and place the child in a foster or pre-adoptive home. After 21 days, CP&P will proceed with the permanent adoption of the baby. There are always many families available who want to adopt an infant.

What happens if the mother, or a relative, wishes to regain custody of a baby?

If the mother, or a relative, wishes to regain custody of the baby they should contact the Safe Haven Hotline at 1-877-839-2339 so that they can begin the process towards a safe reunification.

Don't let another baby be abandoned. If you or someone you know is considering giving up a child, learn about your options.

Safe Haven Hotline
1-877-839-2339

Safe Haven Voluntary Medical Information

Under the Safe Haven law, you do not have to tell us anything, but answering these questions will help us take better care of the child. Please fill out this form with any information you want to share. Then give it to someone in the hospital or mail it in. No stamp is required.

Please tell us what you can about the baby:

Since birth, has the baby been sick?	yes	no	don't know
Any physical handicaps?	yes	no	don't know
Any mental or developmental problems? (for example, the baby never cried or has trouble sucking)	yes	no	don't know

If you answered yes to any of these questions, please give details:

_____

_____

Was child given a name?	yes	no	don't know

If yes, please give only the child's first and/or middle name:

_____

Date and place of birth?

_____

What is the child's race? Religious or cultural background?

_____

Did mother receive medical care during her pregnancy?

	yes	no	don't know
Delivered in a hospital or birthing center?	yes	no	don't know
Was the baby full term (9 months)?	yes	no	don't know

If not, how long was the mother pregnant? _____

What was the birth weight? _____ pounds, _____ ounces

Why is the child being given up? _____

_____

Mother's medical history:

If mother has other children, how many?

Race of mother: _____ Age of mother: _____

Did mother ever have a serious medical problem?

(heart disease, blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, etc.)	yes	no	don't know
History of mental illness?	yes	no	don't know
HIV-positive?	yes	no	don't know
Drug or alcohol abuse?	yes	no	don't know
If yes, was it during the pregnancy?	yes	no	don't know

If you answered yes to any of these questions, please give details:

_____

_____

Father's medical history:

Race of father: _____ Age of father: _____

Did father ever have a serious medical problem?

(heart disease, blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, etc.)	yes	no	don't know
History of mental illness?	yes	no	don't know
HIV-positive?	yes	no	don't know
Drug or alcohol abuse?	yes	no	don't know

If you answered yes to any of these questions, please give details:

_____

_____

How did you learn about Safe Haven?

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR SHARING THIS INFORMATION