

# Safe Haven Guidelines

**For Police, Hospital, Fire Department, Ambulance, First Aid, and Rescue Squad.**

New Jersey's Safe Haven Infant Protection Act allows parents or their representatives to anonymously surrender a newborn baby at any hospital, police station, fire department, ambulance, first aid, or rescue squad in the state, staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If the baby appears to be 30 days old or less, and free of any abuse or neglect, the baby should be accepted with no questions asked. When a baby is surrendered under Safe Haven, the following steps should be taken:

## Take The Baby

If the baby appears older than 30 days or abused or neglected, contact police and handle according to normal police procedures.

## Offer Support

If the birth mother surrenders the baby, she is free to walk away, but you should always offer to connect her to medical care or social services. Explain that by accepting services, she will not give up her legal protections or anonymity guaranteed under the Safe Haven law.

## Don't Ask, But If Someone Tells...

The law requires that you take the baby no questions asked. Whenever possible, hand a Safe Haven questionnaire to the person surrendering the baby and stress that mailing the pre-addressed questionnaire will not compromise the parents' legal protections or anonymity.

Document any information that is offered voluntarily. Useful information would include:

- Any physical or developmental problems the baby may have
- Parent information, such as race, age and medical history
- Baby's birthplace and first name
- Any prenatal care provided to birth mother

## Get The Baby To The Hospital

The baby should be taken immediately to a hospital, either via patrol car, fire truck, ambulance, first aid, or rescue squad. All information shared by the birth mother or her representative should be reported to the emergency room staff.

## Ensure CP&P Is Notified

The receiving hospital is required to call Child Protection and Permanency's Safe Haven Hotline, at **1-877-839-2339**, however, police, fire department, ambulance, first aid, or rescue squad staff may also call when a baby is surrendered to them under the Safe Haven law.

For general information or publications related to the Safe Haven Infant Protection Act, visit [www.njsafehaven.org](http://www.njsafehaven.org)