



Safely Surrendered Baby Law

To: All Safely Surrendered Baby Sites:

Thank you for your continued participation as a Safely Surrendered Baby (SSB) site. As of June 30, 2008, 251 newborns have been safely surrendered in California since the Safely Surrendered Baby (SSB) Law went into effect on January 1, 2001. In contrast, another 149 infants have been found alive following their illegal abandonment.

The intent of the SSB Law (SB 1368) is to encourage parents, who might otherwise abandon their infants in unsafe places, to bring their newborns to a safe place instead. The law requires all California hospitals with emergency departments and other designated locations (which in Contra Costa include fire stations, County clinics, and Kaiser medical offices) to accept physical custody of infants (up to 72 hours old) who are voluntarily surrendered by a parent or other person with legal custody. No questions will be asked and the person who surrenders an infant in accordance with this new law is granted immunity from criminal liability for child abandonment. This person may reclaim the surrendered infant within 14 days.

The following is the protocol for accepting a newborn under the California Safely Surrendered Baby Law:

1. Welcome the parent or person surrendering the infant. Do not be judgmental (this is an emotional and difficult time for the person).
2. Accept the infant (even if it appears older than 72 hours) and begin to assess for any medical needs.
3. Initiate a medical report on the infant. (Fire Stations: Notify Command and Control of a still alarm at the station and contact AMR.)
4. Locate and open the Newborn Safe Surrender Kit. Place a coded, confidential ankle bracelet on the infant and record the code on the face of the Newborn Surrender Kit envelope. Hand the surrendering person the matching coded bracelet and the two inner envelopes. One contains the medical questionnaire with another coded bracelet stapled to it, and the other has resources and rights information for the person surrendering the infant.
5. Once on scene, AMR shall assume custody of the infant and continue to assess and provide for any medical needs of the infant.
6. Fire Stations only: Paramedics shall accompany the infant to the receiving hospital and transfer custody to a designated hospital employee. The receiving hospital will take custody of the infant, and make phone notification with CFS.
7. Notify Children and Family Services (CFS) by them faxing a copy of the Notes on the face of the surrender kit. The CFS fax number is (925) 646-1698. (Send completed Notes on face of surrender kit envelope with infant for Child Protective Services' permanent file.)

In late February 2007, a Richmond woman abandoned her baby outside her apartment complex and is currently undergoing a criminal proceeding. She was not aware of the SSB Law. This unfortunate incident has highlighted the need for continued outreach to the community about the SSB Law and how and where to safely surrender a baby.

Please use the following websites for information on Safe Surrender:

- Contra Costa Health Services Safely Surrendered Baby Law website at http://www.cchealth.org/topics/baby_safe
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS) website for the Safely Surrendered Baby Law at <http://www.babysafe.ca.gov>. Safely Surrender outreach materials in English and Spanish are available for public education activities supporting this program.

Please review the protocol contained in this memo for accepting a Safely Surrendered baby and to share this information with your staff. For replacement Safely Surrender kits or more information, please contact **Padmini Parthasarathy** at **925-313-6178** or **pparthas@hsd.cccounty.us**.

Thank you for helping us ensure a safe alternative for parents who are unable or unwilling to keep their babies.