

Safe Surrender of Newborns

What Everyone need to know about North Carolina's Law



Safe Surrender:
It's in your hands.

Is Safe Surrender the same as Safe Haven? Many states have what are called Safe Haven laws. These designate places where an infant may be surrendered. North Carolina's law is unique in that it designates specific people, not places.

In an Emergency,

Call 911

What is the 2023 amendment to the Safe Surrender Law? An infant up to 30 days old may be left with a designated safe person, legally and anonymously. Designated safe persons are listed below.

Who can receive an infant through safe surrender? The law states an infant may only be surrendered to the following individuals:

- (1) *A health care provider, as defined under G.S. 90-21.11, who is on duty or at a hospital or at a local or district health department or at a nonprofit community health center OR*
- (2) *A first responder who is on duty, including a law enforcement officer, a certified emergency medical services worker, or a firefighter OR*
- (3) *A social services worker who is on duty or at a local department of social services.*

Why is there a safe surrender law? The law provides parents in crisis, or who may feel they have no other choice to care for their infant, a way to surrender their newborn safely, legally, and anonymously. Public awareness is crucial to help parents know this option exists. Help us spread the word by copying and distributing this fact sheet.

What makes a safe surrender legal? The infant is delivered to one of the designated safe persons listed in the law and after a medical assessment it is determined the infant is 30 days old or younger and with no concerns for abuse or neglect.

What happens to the infant? A designated safe person who receives the infant is required to keep it safe and warm and to call the local department of social services right away. The goal is to have the infant adopted into a safe and loving home as quickly as possible.

What should the surrendering parent expect? The designated safe person may ask about your identity and any relevant medical information to help facilitate an adoption. A health information form is available to collect helpful information. Designated safe persons should also advise you that you are not required to give any identifying information and provide you with an informational brochure.

What about the non-surrendering parent? Any parent who hears of a surrendered infant and believes it may be theirs should come forward. The best way to identify yourself is to contact your [local department of Social Services](#).

For more information and access to the health information forms and brochure, visit the [NC DHHS Safe Surrender website](#).