



VA SAFE HAVEN FOR PROVIDERS

1-888-510-2229

24/7 Safe Haven Hotline

VA SAFE HAVEN LAW

In Virginia, the Safe Haven law allows a parent to safely surrender their unharmed infant who is 30 days old or younger, to a staff member at a designated Safe Haven location: a hospital that provides 24-hr emergency services, an attended emergency medical services (EMS) agency that employs emergency medical personnel such as some fire stations and rescue squads, or a newborn safety device located at and operated by such hospital or emergency medical services agency.

Additionally, the Safe Haven law provides 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 was the result of gross negligence or willful misconduct by such personnel.

BEST PRACTICES FOR SAFE HAVEN PROVIDERS

ATTENDED EMS STAFF

- Accept physical custody of the infant under the Safe Haven law.
- Request the surrendering 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.
- Arrange to have the infant transported to the nearest hospital.
- Notify hospital staff that the infant has been surrendered under the Safe Haven law. Hospital staff will then contact the local Department of Social Services to inform them.
- If the surrendering parent contacts you regarding reclaiming custody of the infant, please direct the parent to contact the local 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

- Facilitate conversation around private adoption and make a referral to a private 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, accept physical custody of the infant under the Safe Haven law.
- Request the surrendering 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.
- Contact the local Department of Social Services to inform them that an infant has been surrendered.
- Provide medical care that the infant may require.
- If the surrendering parent contacts you regarding reclaiming custody of the infant, please direct the parent to contact the local 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.

Safe Haven hotline: 1-888-510-2229

www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org

VA Department of Social Services hotline: 1-800-552-7096

<https://www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency/index.cgi>

