

# Newborns can be safely given up at any hospital emergency room in Santa Clara County.



## What is the Safely Surrendered Baby Law?

California's Safely Surrendered Baby Law allows parents to give up their baby confidentially. As long as the baby has not been abused or neglected, parents may give up their newborn without fear of arrest or prosecution.

## How does it work?

A distressed parent who is unable or unwilling to care for a baby can legally, confidentially and safely give up a baby within 72 hours of birth. The baby must be handed to an employee at a hospital emergency room. As long as the child shows no signs of abuse or neglect, no name or other information is required. In case the parent changes his or her mind at a later date and wants the baby back, workers will use bracelets to help connect them to each other. One bracelet will be placed on the baby, and a matching bracelet will be given to the parent.

## What if a parent wants the baby back?

Parents who change their minds can begin the process of reclaiming their newborns within 14 days. These parents should contact the hospital they surrendered the baby to.

## Can only a parent bring in the baby?

In most cases, a parent will bring in the baby. The law allows other people to bring in the baby if they have legal custody.

## Does the parent have to call before bringing in the baby?

No. A parent can bring in a baby anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week so long as the parent gives the baby to someone who works at the hospital.

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

No. However, hospital personnel will ask the parent to fill out a questionnaire designed to gather important medical history information, which is very useful in caring for the child. Although encouraged, filling out the questionnaire is not required.

## What happens to the baby?

The baby will be examined and given medical treatment, if needed. Then the baby will be placed in a pre-adoptive home.

**no shame.**  
**no blame.**  
**no names.**

## What happens to the parent?

Once the parent(s) has safely turned over the baby, they are free to go.

## Why is California doing this?

The purpose of the Safely Surrendered Baby Law is to protect babies from being abandoned by their parents and potentially being hurt or killed. You may have heard tragic stories of babies left in dumpsters or public bathrooms. The parents who committed these acts may have been under severe emotional distress. The mothers may have hidden their pregnancies, fearful of what would happen if their families found out. Because they were afraid and had nowhere to turn for help, they abandoned their infants. Abandoning a baby puts the child in extreme danger. It is also illegal. Too often, it results in the baby's death. Because of the Safely Surrendered Baby Law, this tragedy doesn't ever have to happen in California again.

*Every baby deserves a chance for a healthy life. If someone you know is considering abandoning a newborn, let her know there are other options.*

**For more information call the Safely Surrendered Baby Law Hotline at (877) 272-3327.**