

The Safe Haven for Abandoned Babies Act

What It Means to Leave a Baby With a Safe Haven Under the Act



Daniel's Law

In accordance with the law, this Safe Haven (defined as hospital or hospital outpatient facility, law enforcement agency, fire station, emergency medical services station, and a house of worship during hours staff is there) is required to inform you about the legalities involved in your choice to place the infant in the care of a safe haven.

- You are voluntarily placing this infant in the temporary care of the safe haven.
- If you are the parent of the infant or are acting at the request of the parent and if the infant is thirty-days old or younger, you are granted immunity from prosecution for the act of leaving the infant if you leave him or her with personnel or staff at the safe haven during the hours that staff is there. If the infant was harmed before being turned over to the safe haven, there is no immunity for the person who harmed the infant.
- Although you are not required to disclose your identity, you will be asked to provide background information and medical information regarding the infant and his or her parent(s) to help with placement of the child and the child's medical needs or treatment.
- The safe haven will keep confidential any identifying information provided by the person leaving the infant and will not disclose the information to anyone other than the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) unless a court rules otherwise.
- The safe haven will notify DSS that it has temporary custody of the child. Upon this notification, DSS will have legal custody of the child.
- Within 48 hours after DSS has been notified, DSS will file a petition with the family court about the infant's abandonment. DSS will publish notice in the newspaper about the abandonment of the infant and about a court hearing.
- A hearing about the infant will take place no earlier than 30 and no later than 60 days of the filing of the petition. At the hearing, DSS will tell the court that parents' rights should be terminated and the infant should be adopted. If a parent wants to claim rights to the child or if a family member wishes to ask for custody of the child, they must attend this hearing to assert their claim.

Safe Haven Act of 2000, as amended June 12, 2006