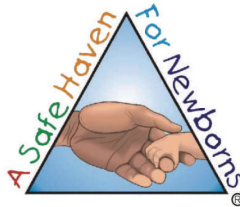


Safe Havens



Information about the Safe Haven Law in Kansas

The Law

The Kansas Newborn Infant Protection Act (K.S.A. 38-2282) became law in January 2007. This law allows a parent, or other person having lawful custody, to surrender an infant to any employee who is on duty at a fire station, city or county health department, or medical care facility. The infant must be 45 days or younger. A parent can surrender an infant without legal repercussions if there is no abuse or neglect.

The Amendment

Newborn Infant Protection Act—Anonymity of Parent Surrendering an Infant; HB 2577 amends the Newborn Infant Protection Act (Act) to expand the list of locations where an infant can be surrendered to include police stations, sheriff's offices, and law enforcement centers. Additionally, the bill protects disclosure of the name or other identifiable information of a parent or custodian who voluntarily surrenders physical custody of an infant under the Act, unless there is reasonable suspicion the infant has been abused, and protects the person or facility receiving the infant from civil and criminal liability for any action taken under the Act.

The parent or custodian is not required to reveal personally identifiable information, but can offer information concerning the infant's familial or medical history. The bill also clarifies that the person or facility to whom an infant is delivered is prohibited from revealing the name or other identifiable information of the person who delivered the infant, unless there is reasonable suspicion the infant has been abused.

What is a Safe Haven?

A Safe Haven is defined as a drop-off site for infants under the Kansas Code for Care of Children (Chapter 38, Article 22-15, Statute 38-2282). In Kansas, these locations include fire stations, city or county health departments, or a medical care facility. The Amendment HB 2577 effective July 1, 2014 expands the list of locations where an infant can be surrendered to include police stations, sheriff's offices, and law enforcement centers.

What happens after a child is dropped off?

As soon as possible after a person takes physical custody of an infant under this section, that individual will notify a local law enforcement agency. This agency will take custody of the infant as an abandoned child and deliver the infant to a designated facility or person (K.S.A. 2008 Supp. 38-2232 and amendments thereto).

Community Awareness Campaign

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) provided a Safe Haven for Newborn sign to be placed outside of county health departments around Kansas that lists 2-1-1 as the number to call for more information. The KDHE, Bureau of Family Health, Children and Families Section website is www.kdheks.gov/c-f/index.html

What is United Way 2-1-1's role?

Have Safe Haven information available:

- Know how to find information on the Kansas law

- Know how to find the closest Safe Haven
- Be ready to answer questions about what a Safe Haven is and what the caller needs to do

To offer other services if needed:

- A pregnant woman may need prenatal care.
- The parent may be in a dangerous situation and need shelter or police help.
- The parent may be experiencing emotional distress and need counseling, etc.

Mother & Child Health Coalition

For more information or to help this cause feel free to visit the Mother & Child Health Coalition website at <http://mchc.net/programs/safe-haven-newborns/>.