



COHESIVE HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT & CONSULTING

Mangum Regional Medical Center

FAQs INFANT SAFE HAVEN LAW

- 1. Once a child is relinquished to the hospital, can the parent change their mind and take the infant back at the time of the drop off without additional follow-up to DHS?**

A: Yes, once DHS is involved we gather all information and if the parent changes their mind, we will work with them to return their child. The timeframe would depend on when the parent changed their mind, if it was prior to our involvement, but after a referral was made, we would just complete our safety evaluation as normal.

- 2. Should the parent be allowed to leave the hospital before DHS is notified?**

A: Yes, DHS would like as much demographic information as possible, but the parent does not have to wait.

- 3. What printed materials are available regarding the parent's rights and reunification with the infant? Does DHS make printed materials available?**

A: DHS has a Safe Haven pamphlet made available for hospitals, DHS offices, etc. to be provided to the parent upon relinquishment.

- 4. Does the hospital need to ensure there is no suspected harm or abuse has occurred to the infant before the parent leaves?**

A: We would want basic questions about the infants care, but it's necessary to inquire about abuse or neglect if the infant is presenting with any injuries or concerns for neglect, such as being malnourished.

- 5. If there is suspected abuse/harm/neglect and the parent leaves anonymously, what does the hospital need to do in addition to notifying the Child Abuse hotline?**

A: Ensure the child receives medical care.

- 6. What number does the hospital need to use to contact DHS if an infant is dropped off under the "Safe Haven" law?**

A: The hotline, 1-800-522-3511.

- 7. What is the average turnaround time from hospital notification to DHS that an infant has been dropped off under the "Safe Haven" law and the time DHS retrieves the infant from the hospital?**

A: It would be assigned as a P1, I would say the initial response would be no more than 2 hours depending upon hospital location.

- 8. Can a non-parent in the state of Oklahoma utilize the "Safe Haven" law? If so, is this person under the same umbrella as the parent?**

- 9. A: No, that person would need to contact DHS and indicate an infant was left with them that they cannot care for.**

10. How does the law work?

A: The law saves babies from unsafe abandonment. It says that parents who do not harm their baby will not be prosecuted for abandonment if they hand their newborn to a responsible adult at a Safe Haven location. It gives a desperate parent a responsible alternative.

11. What do I say when I leave my baby?

A: Once you get to one of the accepted locations (Hospitals, Law Enforcement Agencies, etc.- depending on your state) You will need to relinquish your baby with one of the staff members at the location, and explain that you are relinquishing your infant to them under the Safe Haven Law. You might be asked to fill out some medical information and other important facts about your newborn, yourself, and the father, mainly for the reason of passing along any and all information that might be important to the adoptive parents for the infant. The person who you are relinquishing your baby to will make sure that the baby is unharmed in anyway, and if that is the case, then you will be free to go with no questions asked, and no trouble.

12. Can a mother or parent get baby back?

A: Safe Haven law provides an anonymous and confidential safe place for a newborn when a mother or parent is unable or unwilling to care for the baby. The intent is that a parent would not return for the newborn. If a situation does occur that a parent wishes to reclaim the baby the parent would contact Department of Child and Family Services to initiate this process and consider obtaining legal assistance to regain custody of child.