



BABY ABANDONMENT SOG

SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all members of the Stoney Point Fire Department (SPFD) and shall be adhered to by all members.

PURPOSE

In July 2001, **The Safe Haven for Abandoned Babies Act (GS 14-322.3 & GS 7B-500)** was enacted into law in North Carolina, the act includes multiple facilities as Safe Havens, **including Fire Stations.**

This procedure has been developed to help member of Stoney Point Fire Department with the compliance of this law.

At no time will we turn a child away; however, if at anytime you feel that **The Safe Haven for Abandoned Babies Act** does not apply, please call law enforcement officials immediately.

It is important to remember that this law applies only to infants 7 days or younger. The immunity to the parent only applies if the infant does not show any signs of abuse.

The statute indicates that the following individuals shall without court order take into temporary custody an infant under 7 days of age voluntarily delivered to the individual by the parent who does not express an intent to return for the infant;

- A health care provider, who is on duty or at a hospital or at a local health department
- A law enforcement officer who is on duty or at a police station or sheriff's department
- A social services worker who is on duty or at a local department of social services.
- A certified emergency medical services worker who is on duty or **at a fire or emergency medical services station.**
- Any adult

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An individual who takes an infant into temporary custody shall perform any act necessary to protect the physical health and well-being of the infant **and shall immediately notify the department of social services or a local law enforcement agency.**

Agency	Phone Number
Department Social Services (Fayetteville Branch)	910-323-1540
Cumberland County Sheriff's Office	910-323-1500
Fayetteville Police Department	910-433-1911

Any individual who takes an infant into temporary custody may inquire as to the parents' identities and as to any relevant medical history, **but the parent is not required** to provide the information. The individual shall notify the parent that the parent is not required to provide the information.

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Common questions of State Safe Haven Legislation

Which babies may be relinquished?

- Child must be less than 7 days old.

Who may relinquish a baby?

- Parent:
 - Voluntarily delivers the child.
 - Parent does not express intent to return for the child.

What are the incentives for a person to relinquish a baby at a Safe Haven?

- Protection from Liability:
 - Shall not be prosecuted for abandonment.

Who can accept a relinquished baby?

- Health care provider who is on duty or at a hospital, local or district health department, or nonprofit community health center.
- Law enforcement officer who is on duty or at a police station or sheriff's department.
- Social services worker who is on duty or at a local department of social services.



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- Certified emergency medical service worker who is on duty or at a fire station or emergency medical services station.
 - Any adult.

What are the responsibilities of a Safe Haven?

- Take the child into temporary custody.
- Perform any act necessary to protect the physical health and well-being of the child.
- Immediately notify the department of social services or a local law enforcement agency.
- May ask parent for identification and medical history.
 - Must tell the parent that the parent is not required to provide information.

Is the Safe Haven protected from liability for its actions?

- Yes: Immune from civil or criminal liability for good faith actions.

Children's Rights

- Medical Information:
 - Safe haven may ask the parent for medical history information.
 - Must tell the parent that the parent is not required to provide information.
- **Identifying Information:**
 - Safe haven may ask the parent for identifying information.
 - Must tell the parent that the parent is not required to provide information.

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Care for the Child/Placement for Adoption

- Safe haven takes temporary custody of the child.
- Court may terminate parental rights if the parent voluntarily abandoned an infant pursuant to this law for at least 60 days prior to the filing of the petition.

Efficacy of Safe Havens - Public Information Campaigns

- Department of Health and Human Services, in consultation with law enforcement officials, medical professionals, and representatives of the Department of Public Instruction, shall develop recommendations for a plan to inform the public about this law (Including topics in addition to relinquishment):
 - Including information on responsible parenting.
 - Targeted at adolescents and young adults.