

Safe Surrender of Newborns

Information for Women in Crisis



Safe Surrender:
It's in your hands.



In an Emergency Call
911:

What does the Safe Surrender Law say? An infant up to 30 days old may be given to a designated safe person, legally and anonymously. Designated safe persons are: *A health care provider, as defined under G.S. 90-21.11, who is on duty or at a hospital or at a local or district health department or at a nonprofit community health center OR A first responder who is on duty, including a law enforcement officer, a certified emergency medical services worker, or a firefighter OR A social services worker who is on duty or at a local department of social services.*

I have this baby that I can't care for. I am terrified that someone will find out.

What can I do? Safe Surrender is meant for women who are scared, who want to keep their identity unknown, and who are not able to take advantage of the other choices available to them. It is legal to find a designated safe person (see above) and hand them the baby.

What other options are available to a woman who has a baby she is unable to keep?

There have always been ways for women to give up their babies in a safe and kind manner. Agencies can help you with prenatal care, arranging for the birth, and arranging for the adoption of your child to a safe and loving home. Contact your department of social services, county health department, or "Google" adoption resources in NC.

What if I would like to provide health or other information about the baby?

One of the concerns with Safe Surrender is that children will grow up without knowing anything about their history or parentage. That is why the more conventional forms of adoption are preferred. However, a surrendering parent can help answer their child's natural questions about family heritage and health history. Information can be given to the designated safe person who receives the baby or may be sent in a letter to the county department of social services.

What is the advice for women who are not sharing a pregnancy publicly?

Seek prenatal care. Talk to someone you trust to give you good advice. If you do not have health insurance, your local health department or department of social services can tell you if you're eligible for Medicaid (which covers over 40 percent of all births in the state). Plan for the birth. Having a baby alone or with someone who is not medically trained can cause serious injury to you or your child. It can also be a terrifying or traumatic experience to give birth alone.

I had a baby and now I can't stop bleeding. Plus, I have a fever. Am I in danger?

If you have any of the following symptoms, seek medical care right away: vaginal bleeding that does not slow down when you rest, a bad smell to vaginal blood, a fever of 101 or above, severe headaches, pain in the abdomen or vaginal area, blurred vision, or a feeling of burning when you urinate.