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Children & Family Services Division

Office of Child Abuse Prevention

SAFE SURRENDER BABY HOTLINE

Statewide toll free hotline telephone number for safe surrender baby information and locations

The Safely Surrendered Baby Law became a permanent statute in Section 1255.7 of the California Health and Safety Code in January 2006. The law seeks to prevent newborn infants from being discarded in an unsafe manner. The legislation instead provides a program for the safe surrender of newborn infants to a hospital or fire agency that has been determined as an appropriate safe surrender site. Newborn infants less than 72 hours of age may be surrendered with no questions asked. A surrendering person may be the parent or a person the parent entrusted the infant to for surrendering. A band is placed on the infant and the surrendering person receives a matching band. The surrendering person is encouraged to fill out an optional medical questionnaire, but the documentation is not mandatory. Infants receive a medical examination and are placed in foster homes by the county's child welfare agency.

Since the law's passage, the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) has provided education and outreach to promote knowledge and understanding of the law. In furtherance of this goal, OCAP has entered into an agreement with The Information and Referral Federation of Los Angeles County— "211 LA County"—to facilitate the utilization of a statewide toll free telephone number that provides safely surrendered baby information and identification of locations of safe surrender baby sites in the state. The hotline number is 1-877-BABYSAF or 1-877-222-7923. The hotline became live in February 2010.

211 LA County (<https://www.211la.org/>) has been providing community resource information and referral to 20 counties in the state, including safe surrender baby sites. Los Angeles County has the same hotline in operation. In the other 38 counties not contracting with 211, hospitals and fire stations were surveyed to compile a database of safe surrender locations. 211 LA County merged the data of the 38 counties' safe surrender site locations and established a telecommunications linkup to their operators so that anyone in the state who dials the hotline will have access to locations of all the safe surrender sites in the state.

In 2015-16, 211 LA County will continue the operation of the Statewide Baby Safe Hotline and develop and implement an outreach program for promotion.

Information about the law may be found at www.babysafe.ca.gov. The site also has directions for printing brochures and posters in English, Spanish, Chinese and Russian. OCAP has a limited amount of brochures and posters available for order in English and Spanish. Publication requests can be sent to PublicationRequests@dss.ca.gov.

The SSB hotline is funded by Safely Surrender Baby Funds.