

Bruce Rauner
Governor

Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services

Beverly J. Walker
Acting Director

October 1, 2017

Dear School Principal:

We are writing to offer our help to ensure that your students and faculty know about the Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act, commonly referred to as the Baby Safe Haven Law. The Act offers a safe, legal option to unsafe infant abandonment. An unharmed newborn, up to 30 days old, may be handed to staff at hospitals, emergency medical care facilities, police stations, firehouses, college and university police stations and Illinois State Police district headquarters. No questions need to be answered and there is no fear of prosecution. Since 2001, 120 infants have been safely relinquished under the law.

During that same time, 80 infants have been illegally abandoned; and tragically, 42 of those infants did not survive. If only those mothers had known about the Safe Haven alternative and took advantage of it. That is why we need your help.


The [Comprehensive Health Education Act \(105 ILCS 110/3\)](#) requires that information about the Newborn Infant Protection Act be included in school health education classes for students in grades 6-12. The Save Abandoned Babies Foundation and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services are pleased to provide **Teaching Tools** to assist you in meeting this requirement. Teaching Tools are found at www.SaveAbandonedBabies.org. Click "Educators" on the homepage.

We are asking for your help to distribute this material. A sample brochure is included; and posters, brochures and other materials are available on the DCFS website: www.DCFS.illinois.gov. Click "Baby Safe Haven Law Information" under the **Safe Kids** heading.

Please complete and return the order form and the materials will be mailed to you free of charge.

Thank you for your assistance in protecting the children of Illinois. Please contact us if we can support you in any way to meet this critical responsibility under the law.

Sincerely,



Beverly J. Walker

Beverly J. Walker
Acting Director



Dawn M. Geras

Executive Chairman, Save Abandoned
Babies Foundation

Office of the Director
100 W. Randolph St., Suite 6-100 • Chicago, Illinois 60601-3249
312-814-2074 • 312-814-1888 Fax
www.DCFS.illinois.gov

REQUEST FORM FOR NEWBORN INFANT PROTECTION ACT POSTERS AND BROCHURES

Information Packet for individuals relinquishing infants at Safe Havens
 Three-brochure packet includes: Safe Haven Law information and optional registration form (CFS 1050-74-1), post-partum health issues (CFS 1050-74-2) and Illinois Adoption Registry (CFS 1050-74-3) brochures

English 5 25 50 Other quantity _____
 Spanish 5 25 50 Other quantity _____
 Polish 5 25 50 Other quantity _____



No Shame, No Blame, No Names poster (11 x 17)

English: _____
 Spanish: _____
 Polish: _____



NEW 2017 Don't Panic poster (8½ x 11)

English: _____
 Spanish: _____
 Polish: _____



Help is Here poster (8½ x 11)

English: _____
 Spanish: _____
 Polish: _____



No Shame, No Blame, No Names brochure (CFS 1050-74)

English: 50 100 200 Other _____
 Spanish: 50 100 200 Other _____
 Polish: 50 100 200 Other _____



Don't Panic poster (8½ x 11)

English: _____
 Spanish: _____
 Polish: _____



Quick Reference Card

English: 50 100 200 Other _____
 Spanish: 50 100 200 Other _____
 Polish: 50 100 200 Other _____

School Name: _____

Principal's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Approximate number of students enrolled: _____

Three ways to order:

Fax to Illinois DCFS, 217-785-8068 • Scan and email to info@saveabandonedbabies.org
 Mail to Save Abandoned Babies Foundation, 55 E. Erie, #2905, Chicago, IL 60611

For more information, visit www.saveabandonedbabies.org or www.DCFS.illinois.gov

Give your baby a chance.

Kelli's Story

My name is Kelli and I found out I was pregnant when I was a freshman in high school. I was so scared that I hid my pregnancy from my family and friends. I worried that people would reject me or be angry with me if they found out I was pregnant. I was wrong.

I delivered my baby by myself. Because I was still too frightened to talk to anyone and ask for help, I made a terrible mistake that I can never take back. I left my newborn on a neighbor's porch. My baby died there, and my life will never be the same. I don't want the same thing to happen to you and your baby.

Please, if you are pregnant, talk to a parent, a teacher, a parent of your friend or other adult that you trust. I know that talking about your pregnancy is difficult, but there are people who can help you.

If you are unable to keep your child, please give him or her a chance to grow up. The law in Illinois allows you to leave your unharmed newborn baby, up to 30 days old, at a staffed police or fire station, hospital or emergency care facility. Your baby will be given a health exam and medical care, and then adopted by a loving family.

For confidential information or help, please call 1-888-510-2229

For confidential information or help, please contact:

1-888-510-2229 (Toll-free)
or visit the **Save Abandoned Babies Foundation at:**
www.SaveAbandonedBabies.org

For information about adoption, contact:
Illinois Adoption Registry
Toll-Free • 1-877-323-5299
www.idph.state.il.us/vital/iladoptreg.htm

How you can help

- Do an awareness project for your school community service requirement.
- Encourage your organization, school, or club to write a story about the law.
- Health classes are now required to teach this law. See if your school is in compliance.
- Check that your police, fire and hospitals display the required Safe Haven sign.
- Have an idea to help? Want to volunteer? Contact info@SaveAbandonedBabies.org.
- After you read this brochure, pass it on.

Tell a friend. Talk about it.
You might save a life.



Printed by Authority of the State of Illinois
DCFS #182 – Oct 2017 – 10,000 Copies
CFS 1050-74, Rev. 12/09

No Shame. No Blame. No Names.



Illinois has a safe place for your newborn.

*No one knew you were pregnant.
No one knows about your baby.
You can't take care of your baby.
What are you going to do?*

An unwanted pregnancy can be a traumatic experience. You may have overwhelming feelings of isolation, fear, or shame that could lead to irrational thoughts or acts, such as unsafely abandoning your baby.

Each year in Illinois, there are disturbing reports of newborn babies found in dumpsters and other unsafe places. Under the Illinois Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act, unharmed infants **30 days old or younger** can be handed to staff at a safe haven. No questions asked. You don't have to give your name. The police will not be called. Your baby will get medical care and be adopted.

The entire Act can be found at http://www.state.il.us/dcf/library/com_communications_sumlicen_abinfant.shtml

Where are safe havens?

In Illinois, safe havens for newborns are:



- Staffed fire stations
- Staffed police stations
- Hospitals
- Emergency care facilities

Look for this sign to identify safe havens in your community.

What does the law do?

The law is intended to provide an alternative to the parents of newborn infants to relinquish their unharmed infants to staff in safe havens while remaining anonymous and avoiding civil or criminal liability. It is recognized that establishing a traditional adoption plan through a private or public adoption agency or choosing to parent the child is a preferable parenting plan to abandonment or relinquishment of an infant. However, the purpose of this law is to reduce the risk of harm to a newborn by a parent who may be under undue stress.

What happens at a safe haven?

Newborns can be handed to personnel at a hospital, emergency care facility, staffed police station or staffed fire station. Staff members at emergency care facilities, fire stations and police stations will make arrangements for transportation of the infant to the nearest hospital.

Hospital personnel will conduct a physical examination of the newborn infant and provide any needed medical care. The hospital is deemed to have temporary protective custody of the newborn until the infant is discharged to an adoption agency.

If you wish, you can fill out forms to provide medical information about your newborn that will help healthcare workers taking care of your baby. The forms may be filled out at the safe haven

location, or you can take the forms with you and return them by mail. You can also download the forms from www.saveabandonedbabies.org or www.state.il.us/dcf/library/com_communications_sumlicen_abinfant.shtml. All of the information that you provide remains confidential. You do not need to give your name.

Parental rights

There is a presumption that by relinquishing a newborn infant at a safe haven, the infant's parent consents to the termination of his or her parental rights with respect to the infant.

Consider adoption

Every child deserves a safe, loving, permanent home. You can help provide this by making an adoption plan, even before giving birth. Several public and private agencies in Illinois provide services to those who choose to allow their child to be adopted. Agency staff carefully interview and check the backgrounds of prospective adoptive parents to make sure that they:

- Have no criminal or child abuse history
- Have room in their home for a child
- Can support the child financially
- Can provide a loving, safe home

For information about adoption, please call the Illinois Adoption Registry: 1-877-323-5299 (toll-free in Illinois) or www.idph.state.il.us/vital/iladoptreg.htm.