

# Safe Havens For Infants

**You've hidden your pregnancy. . . You don't want anyone to know . . . But what will you do with the baby?**

## **The Solution:**

Safe Havens for Infants allows a birth parent to confidentially leave an unharmed infant (up to 30 days old) with a medical worker at a hospital, emergency medical staff at a fire station, or a police officer.

Abandoning an infant in an unsafe place should **NEVER** be an option.

## **What to do:**

Hospitals are the safest places to deliver babies. If possible, go to a hospital when you are in labor. Once at the hospital, you can speak with a staff member about wanting to leave your baby in the SAFE HAVENS for INFANTS program.

If you do not deliver the baby in a hospital or you leave the hospital with the baby and later decide to leave your child in the SAFE HAVENS for INFANTS program, you have 30 days to take your infant to any of the following places:

A hospital emergency room. You must tell a hospital staff member that you want to leave your baby in the SAFE HAVENS for INFANTS program.

A local police or fire station with emergency medical staff. Tell them you want to leave your baby in the SAFE HAVENS for INFANTS program.

You will not be prosecuted for leaving your infant with designated authorities as long as no abuse or neglect is suspected.

## **You have help:**

If you are willing, you may fill out confidential medical forms regarding your medical history. This will help your baby in the future.

Confidential care and shelter is available. . .

Allen County Children Services is required to look for a safe and healthy environment for your baby. This may include a permanent adoptive home.

Should you decide to re-establish your parental rights, you will be asked to take a DNA test (at your own expense) for verification.

## **There is a safe place:**

Having a baby can be scary, especially if you aren't ready to raise a child. If you are in this situation and don't want anyone to know you had a baby, don't look for the quickest, nearest place to leave your infant. The baby may not survive the experience and, if caught, you will be prosecuted.

## **You have an option:**

If you find yourself in a crisis situation with an infant you do not want or you are unable to care for, there is an option that will protect the baby and protect your identity.

Abandoning a baby in an unsafe place with no help in sight is never the right decision. Ohio law protects parents from criminal prosecution when they choose a safe alternative for the infant. Allen County Children Services, along with local hospitals, law enforcement and other medical staff are joining together to help you and your infant.