

You're afraid. You can't keep this baby.

You just want someone to take it, keep it safe, and make sure it gets a good home.



Don't panic. There are people who will help you with NO QUESTIONS ASKED.

Illinois' Safe Haven Law

Illinois offers a safe option for a desperate parent in crisis. By handing your unharmed baby, 30 days old or younger, to personnel at any hospital, emergency medical facility, staffed fire station, or police station you can walk away with no questions asked.

The baby will be cared for and placed in a loving home for adoption. No attempt whatsoever will be made to contact you. No crime will have been committed. This is a TRULY safe process.

This law was written to provide a safe alternative to abandonment for Illinois parents who feel they cannot cope with a newborn baby. It offers safe havens for newborns, and is:

- **Private.** No one will ask your name.
- **Legal.** You will not be breaking any laws.
- **Safe.** Your baby will be given medical care and placed in a good home.
- **Supportive.** You will be offered medical care and counseling.



A summary of the law and access to the full text of the Act can be found by clicking [here](#).

Other States' Safe Haven Laws

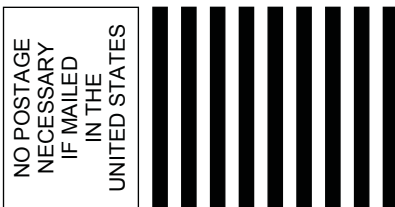
Click [here](#) for information about safe haven laws in other states.

Questions?

- Call our crisis line 24 hours a day for confidential information, 1-888-510-BABY.
- Call the Save Abandoned Babies Foundation, 1-312-440-0229 (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).
- [Email](#) the the Save Abandoned Babies Foundation.

SAB is on Facebook! [Like our page](#) and help get the word out on the Safe Haven law!

Fold Here



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STATE OF IL DEPT OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES
410 S 11TH ST
SPRINGFIELD IL 62703-9903



Additional Resources

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

www.DCFS.illinois.gov

Advocacy Office for Children and Family Services: 800-232-3798
(weekdays 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

Hotline: 800-252-2873 (24-hours)

Save Abandoned Babies Foundation

www.saveabandonedbabies.org
312-440-0229

Illinois Department of Human Services

www.dhs.state.il.us
Help Line: 800-843-6154
(TTY 800-447-6404)

Midwest Adoption Center

www.macadopt.org
847-298-9096

Illinois Adoption Registry and Medical Information Exchange (IARMIE) Program

www.idph.state.il.us/vitalrecords/index.htm
877-323-5299 (toll-free) or
217-557-5159

The IARMIE program allows birth parents to authorize or prohibit the release of identifying information. Confidential facts may be released to registrants only after at least two parties to the adoption have filed explicit mutual consents for the exchange of this information. If you register with the IARMIE, you must provide your name and a photocopy of a State-issued ID, but this information will be kept confidential if you wish. The Department of Public Health also provides application forms to register with IARMIE.

Vital medical information may be exchanged anonymously through the Medical Information Exchange. This information can only be exchanged if you and your adult adopted child (or your child's adoptive parent, if the child is under age 21) voluntarily register and agree to exchange these facts.

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help is here.



and "here" is anywhere
you see this sign.

You're scared and alone,
but you're not out of options.

You have come to the
right place to get help!

This brochure explains
your rights and what
happens next.

Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services



Thank you for bringing your baby to a Safe Haven. You have made a difficult but responsible decision. Your baby will be adopted by a family that is waiting for the opportunity to love and care for a child. Please provide some background information to us now. It will help your baby have a healthy future. You can do this anonymously. It's OK if you don't know all the answers, but whatever you do know will be a big help to both your baby and his or her adoptive family.

Illinois law (325 ILCS 2/1-70) says:

- You can leave your unharmed baby, who can be up to 30 days old, and
- You can walk away with no questions asked, and
- Remain anonymous and protected from prosecution.
- You must hand the baby to a staff person at a hospital, staffed fire station, police station, or sheriff's office, and
- If you leave the baby with someone at a staffed fire, police, or sheriff station, the baby will be transported to a nearby hospital and seen by a doctor.
- If you leave your baby with a person at a Safe Haven, there is a legal presumption that you are the baby's biological parent, that you consent to the termination of your parental rights and you are relinquishing your baby for adoption.

A check will be done to make sure the baby has not been reported missing. The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) will contact an Illinois adoption agency, which will place the baby with an adoptive family. The adoption agency will go to court to be appointed the baby's legal guardian until the adoption is finalized. During the adoption proceeding, the birthparents' legal rights to the baby will be terminated.

If you leave your baby at a fire, police, or sheriff station and return within 72 hours, the facility must inform you of the name and location of the hospital the baby was taken to. If you change your mind after leaving your baby at a Safe Haven, call DCFS at 800-252-2873.

- When you call DCFS, request the name of the adoption agency your baby was placed with and find out where the adoption proceeding is taking place.
- If you want to try to get your baby back, you must petition the court for a return of custody. This must be done before your parental rights are terminated by the court.
- You have a limited time before your parental rights are terminated. The court can terminate your parental rights 60 days after you abandon your baby.
- If you do petition the court to get your baby back before your parental rights have been terminated, the court may put the adoption on hold for up to 60 more days and require:
 - o genetic testing to see if the baby is yours, and
 - o that DCFS conduct an investigation and home study with recommendations for the court
- If you don't try to get your baby back before your parental rights are terminated, you are barred from any future attempts to get your baby back or assert your rights as a parent.

Please answer these questions and return this form by mail to the DCFS State Central Register, 406 East Monroe Street, Station 30, Springfield, IL 62701. You do not need to give your name unless you wish to do so. It's okay to answer some of the questions and leave others blank. Any information you are able to provide will be helpful. If you do provide identifying information, it will remain confidential. This is an anonymous, safe and legal process. In the future, you and your child (or your child's adoptive parents, if the child is under age 21) may want to exchange information anonymously or have contact. If you do provide identifying information here, it will not be given to anyone else without your consent first.

Date you brought your baby to the Safe Haven: _____

Location of Safe Haven: _____

Mother's age: _____ Father's age: _____

Mother's race and ethnicity: _____

Father's race and ethnicity: _____

Date baby was born: _____

Was the baby premature? Yes No

Describe any problems with the pregnancy or delivery _____

Where was the baby born (city/state)? _____

During the pregnancy did you use any of the following?

Cigarettes: How much and at what point in the pregnancy? _____

Alcohol: How much and at what point in the pregnancy? _____

Drugs/Medications: Which and at what point in the pregnancy? _____

Did you receive any prenatal care? If so, please describe: _____

Do you have any other children? Yes No
If so, how old are they? _____

Blood Relatives: This means the baby's mother, father, sister, brother, grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, or cousins. Please circle if any blood relative has any of these medical conditions:

| | | |
|------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Allergies | Diabetes | Mental Illness |
| Asthma | Down Syndrome | Muscular Dystrophy |
| Cancer | Heart Disease | Seizures |
| Depression | High Blood Pressure | |
| Other: | _____ | |

If you would like to write your child and/or your child's adoptive family a note, please use the space below or attach a separate page. **You may do so even if you do not want to provide your identifying information.** _____

Optional identifying information:

Today's Date: _____

Mother's name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Phone: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Mother's Date of Birth: _____

Father's name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Phone: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Father's Date of Birth: _____



Additional Resources

Mayo Clinic

Postpartum Care: What to Expect After a Vaginal Birth

www.mayoclinic.org

Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses

*Patient Education: Postpartum Changes
and Postpartum Self Care*

www.awhonn.org

American Pregnancy Association

www.americanpregnancy.org

Postpartum Support International

www.postpartum.net

The information provided in this brochure is not medical advice. You should seek IMMEDIATE medical attention by calling your health care provider or going to an emergency room if you experience any of the signs described.



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A stylized illustration of several flowers on thin green stems. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with colors including pink, purple, and yellow. Some are fully open, while others are buds. The background is a light, warm yellow.

Taking Care of Yourself After Giving Birth

Giving birth is very hard work and takes a toll on your body. You will need time and rest to be yourself again. This brochure explains physical and emotional changes that may happen after you give birth.

Physical and emotional changes you may experience after delivery:

Bleeding from your vagina will be bright red, like a period. Over a few days, the blood will lessen and fade to brown then pink, finally becoming clear in about 4 to 6 weeks. If bleeding continues to be heavy (filling more than one sanitary pad in 1 hour), turns bright red, contains clots bigger than a quarter, or produces a foul odor, then you need to call a doctor or go to the emergency room. This could be a sign of infection or that the placenta was not fully discharged.

When you go to the bathroom, it may sting when your urine comes out or it may come out in small trickles until you regain full bladder control. It is important to urinate at least once every 6 hours. When your bladder is empty, your uterus (womb) can return to its normal position in your body. If you have difficulty urinating, experience pain or burning when urinating, or feel a need to urinate often but only a small amount comes out, then you need to drink more fluids and notify a doctor. You could have a urinary tract infection.

Some women have cramps after the birth. These "afterpains" can last 2-5 days and mean that your uterus is contracting normally.

About 5 days after giving birth, if you have pain in your lower abdomen, then you need to call a health care provider. This could be a sign that you did not completely discharge the placenta.

It is normal to have a temperature between 97 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit. At any time following delivery, if your temperature goes over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, then call a health care provider. This could be a sign of infection.

Severe headache, blurred vision, or swelling of the face, ankles, or fingers could be a sign of toxemia or pre-eclampsia. Go to the emergency room to see a doctor.

Sharp pain in your chest, shortness of breath, concentrated pain, or redness/swelling in your thigh or calf might indicate a blood clot. Call a doctor. If you are unable to reach a doctor, have someone take you to the emergency room or call 911 for an ambulance.

Your breasts will stop producing milk about 7-10 days after you give birth. Using cold compresses, wearing a supportive bra 24 hours/day, not touching the breasts, and taking a pain reliever, such as ibuprofen, may help with the discomfort.

If you have pain, swelling, tenderness, redness, heat, or a lump in your breast, you may have an infection called "mastitis." Call a doctor as soon as possible to get treatment before the infection gets worse.

You may feel hemorrhoids on your bottom and may have itching, bleeding, or pain while having a bowel movement. Hemorrhoids are common during pregnancy. The strain of pushing during birth may cause more swelling. These hemorrhoids are usually most painful the first few days after giving birth. There are several ways you can make yourself more comfortable:

- Use a donut-shaped pillow to sit on,
- Sit in a few inches of cool water in a clean bathtub,
- Use Tucks pads,
- Drink 8 glasses of water a day, and
- Eat foods containing fiber, such as whole grain products, raw fruits, and vegetables, and avoid sweets and cheese.

Many women experience changes in their moods following childbirth. You may feel happy one moment and weepy the next. If these moods last more than 2 weeks and you feel depressed most of the time, have thoughts of harming yourself, or are unable to cope with everyday stresses, you should talk to a health care professional immediately. You may have postpartum depression, which can be treated.