

South Metro Fire Department
Clinical Policies and Procedures

Title: Safe Place for Newborns
Effective Date: December 15, 2015
Authorized By: Keith Wesley, MD Medical Director
Standard: Patient Care and Transport
Policy: South Metro Fire shall provide a Safe Haven for newborn babies in lieu of abandonment, injury, or death in a manner prescribed by Minnesota State Law.

I. Purpose

This policy provides guidelines for following the Safe Haven Law as defined by the state of Minnesota that requires all hospital employees, including EMS personnel, to receive a newborn and allow for a person to relinquish an unwanted infant anonymously.

II. Definitions

- A. Safe Haven – means a hospital, health care provider who provides urgent care medical services, or an ambulance service dispatched in response to a 911 call from a mother or a person with the mother’s permission to relinquish a newborn infant.
- B. Newborn – born in the past 7 days.

III. Procedure

A mother may choose to call 911 to transport a newborn baby to the hospital. SMFD would then become involved in the transport of the newborn and would need to comply with the fundamental principles listed below.

- A. The newborn was born within 7 days of being received as determined within a reasonable degree of medical certainty: and
- B. The newborn is in an unharmed condition. Any injury or abuse of the newborn negates this law. Police should be notified.
- C. EMS personnel must not inquire as to the identity of the mother or the person leaving the newborn nor are they to call the police, provided there are no injuries to the newborn at presentation.
- D. EMS personnel may ask the mother or the person leaving the newborn about medical history of the mother and/or newborn. Record any information that is willfully shared such as, child’s health, race, date of birth, place of birth or medical history of the parents. The mother or the person leaving the newborn is not under any obligation to provide information.

- E. EMS personnel may provide the mother or person leaving the newborn with information about the destination to which the newborn will be transported (e.g., Saint Joseph's, United, etc.) and how to contact social service agencies.
- F. The newborn is to be transported to the closest HealthEast acute care hospital emergency department and transfer of care conducted leaving any pertinent information with the staff members that are assuming care. The person presenting the newborn may accompany the newborn to the receiving hospital if the person so requests.
- G. The SMFD crew will contact a Supervisor, Chief Officer, or the Medical Director immediately after transfer of care is concluded

IV. Immunity

EMS personnel are immune from any criminal or civil liability that otherwise might result from their action of receiving a newborn, if they are acting in good faith.

Previous versions: