



**SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH  
EMERGENCY  
MEDICAL SERVICES**

<b>EMS POLICY</b>	<b>512</b>
Effective:	<b>April 2024</b>
Approval: EMS Director <b>Travis Kusman, MPH</b>	Signed:
Approval: EMS Medical Director <b>Greg Gilbert, MD</b>	Signed:

## **SAFELY SURRENDERED BABY PROGRAM**

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### **I. PURPOSE**

- A. This policy identifies the local resources and training materials to be used to support San Mateo County’s Safely Surrendered Baby Program. California’s Safely Surrendered Baby Law (SB1368) requires all California Emergency Departments and designated sites, such as fire stations, to accept safely surrendered infants.
- B. The Safely Surrendered Baby Law was created to encourage parents who might otherwise abandon their infants in unsafe places to bring their newborns to a safe place without fear of legal consequences. The law creates legal immunity from criminal liability for child abandonment so long as the child is voluntarily surrendered by a parent or person with legal custody at a designated “Safely Surrendered Site.”

### **II. AUTHORITY**

Health & Safety Code §1255.7

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

Emergency Medical Services Agency (“LEMSA”) [or “Agency”]: The San Mateo County EMS Agency is designated as the Local Emergency Medical Services Agency (LEMSA) and is statutorily charged with primary responsibility for administration and medical control of emergency medical services in San Mateo County.

Parent: The lawful father or mother of a person.

Safe Surrender Site: A location designated by the board of supervisors of a county or by a local fire agency, upon the approval of the appropriate local governing body of the agency, to be responsible for accepting physical custody of a minor child who is 72-hours old or younger from a parent or individual who has lawful custody of the child and who surrenders the child pursuant to Section 271.5 of the Penal Code or a location within a public or private hospital that is designated by that hospital to be responsible for accepting physical custody of a minor child who is 72 hours old or younger from a parent or individual who has lawful custody of the child and who surrenders the child pursuant to Section 271.5 of the Penal Code.

### **IV. POLICY**

- A. All EMS personnel will be trained in the roles and responsibilities of the San Mateo County Safely Surrendered Baby Program using the standardized county-wide training. The

standardized curriculum supports EMS, Emergency Department, and Labor and Delivery personnel in the proper intake and notification procedures during a Safe Surrender.

- B. Designated Safely Surrender Sites will have appropriate signage and a reliable process to store and replace newborn safe surrender kits.
- C. The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors has designated all local fire stations, except those stations staffed by volunteers (i.e., La Honda, Kings Mountain, and Loma Mar), as “safe-surrendered sites” for babies.
- D. Fire station responsibilities:
  - 1. Each designated fire station should display the official Safe Surrender sign.
  - 2. Each fire station will keep on hand a minimum of twelve (12) Safe Surrender brochures explaining how to reclaim a surrendered newborn within the allowed 14-day period. These brochures can be obtained from San Mateo County Human Services Agency.
  - 3. Safe Surrender packets can be obtained from the JPA EMS supervisor. Each packet shall contain:
    - a. Written procedure for accepting the newborn;
    - b. One coded ankle identification bracelet for the newborn;
    - c. One coded identification bracelet for the adult who is surrendering the newborn;
    - d. Safe Surrender newborn medical questionnaires, one in English and one in Spanish; and
    - e. Safe Surrender fact sheets, one in English and one in Spanish.
  - 4. Each fire station will keep on hand at least five (5) Safe Surrender packets.

## V. PROCEDURE

- A. When accepting an infant:
  - 1. Welcome the person surrendering the infant. Do not be judgmental as this is likely an emotional and difficult time for the person.
  - 2. Assess infant for immediate medical needs and treat as necessary. If the infant appears to have an urgent medical condition contact Public Safety Dispatch (“PSC”) immediately for a 9-1-1 ambulance response. Do not delay treating the infant to complete the next steps.
  - 3. Place the smaller coded ankle bracelet on the infant and record the code on a prehospital patient care record.
  - 4. Give the surrendering person the:
    - a. Larger coded identification bracelet
    - b. postage prepaid envelope
    - c. Safe Surrender newborn medical questionnaire (*available in English and Spanish*)
    - d. Safe Surrender fact sheet

5. If the surrendering person seems willing, assist her/him with completing the medical questionnaire. Give the completed questionnaire to the transporting ambulance crew to be taken to the hospital with the infant.
6. Contact Public Safety Communications and request a 9-1-1 ambulance to respond to your location.
7. Notify San Mateo County Child Protective Services (“CPS”) at (800) 632-4615 or (650) 595-7922. Be prepared to describe any evidence of abuse.
8. The ambulance crew will transport the infant to the closest hospital for medical evaluation. The ambulance crew will notify the fire service paramedic that accepted the infant of the receiving hospital.
9. Fire service personnel will notify the Battalion Chief and the JPA EMS Supervisor as soon as possible.
10. The JPA EMS Supervisor will notify on-call EMS Duty Officer.
11. If the adult returns to the Fire Station to reclaim the child, fire service personnel will provide the adult with an informational brochure from CPS about how to reclaim the child within the allowed 14-day period.

## **VI. REQUESTING ADDITIONAL SAFELY SURRENDER KITS**

EMS personnel who need additional Safely Surrender kits for their station should request such from their direct supervisor. EMS provider agencies who need to order additional Safely Surrender kits may be requested directly from the California Office of Child Abuse Protection by completing and emailing the [Order Form](#) to [PublicationRequests@DSS.ca](mailto:PublicationRequests@DSS.ca).