



CDSS

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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March 29, 2010

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-19-10

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY PROBATION OFFICERS

SUBJECT: NEW STATEWIDE TOLL-FREE NUMBER FOR HOTLINE PROVIDING
STATEWIDE SAFE SURRENDER BABY SITE LOCATIONS

REFERENCE: SENATE BILL 1368, CHAPTER 824 OF THE STATUTES OF 2000;
SENATE BILL 139, CHAPTER 150 OF THE STATUTES OF 2003;
SENATE BILL 116, CHAPTER 625 OF THE STATUTES OF 2005;
HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTION 1255.7; ALL COUNTY LETTER
NUMBER 02-01

The purpose of this All County Information Notice (ACIN) is to advise county agencies of a new statewide, toll-free hotline (1-877-BABYSAF) or (1-877-222-9723), providing safe surrender baby site locations throughout the state. The Safely Surrendered Baby law provides a safe alternative to abandonment of a new born baby. The intent of the law is to provide freedom from prosecution and maintenance of confidentiality for the individual safely surrendering a baby within 72 hours of birth at a designated safe surrender site.

This hotline is currently in operation in Los Angeles County and other counties by the Information and Referral Network, also known as 211 LA County. It has now been expanded statewide for the purpose of providing information about safe surrender baby site locations in all counties.

While safe surrender baby site information has also been provided by 211 LA County in 20 counties through their information and referral services, callers from the other 38 counties did not have access to information about safe surrender site locations in their areas. Callers in all counties will now have access to safe surrender baby site locations by phoning the hotline. For callers in the 20 counties already using 211 LA County, they will continue to

be able to dial 211 for information. They may also call the hotline number in order to locate the safe surrender sites in their counties.

Callers to the new safe surrender baby hotline will receive information about safe surrender site locations in local communities by ZIP code. Some counties only have one safe surrender hospital site, while other counties have many sites that include both fire stations and hospitals. Several counties have no designated sites but callers from those counties will receive information about adjacent county locations.

An incorrect perception exists that all fire stations statewide are designated as safe surrender sites. Many rural fire stations are not staffed full-time and have never been designated as a site by their county Board of Supervisors as required by law in order to be a safe surrender site. With the implementation of this hotline, the guesswork will be absent and more effective communication will occur about the location of official, designated sites.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) requests that, if possible, counties place this hotline telephone number on their websites and advertise it in any ways that they think are useful. In addition to the hotline, the CDSS also offers safely surrendered baby publications that provide information about the law. These materials, as well as additional information about the law, may be accessed at our web site at www.babysafe.ca.gov.

Please contact us if you are uncertain whether a specific fire station or hospital in your county has been designated as a site. Also, if a site that you believe should be listed as a safe surrender site is not listed with the hotline, please contact us at (916) 651-6960 with the pertinent information. Other than hospital locations, any official safe surrender baby site must be designated as such by the county Board of Supervisors.

If you have any questions about this new hotline, please contact Lee Ann Kelly, Acting Chief, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, at (916) 651-6960, or by email at LeeAnn.Kelly@dss.ca.gov. Should you have any questions about the California Safely Surrendered Baby Law and/or policies, please contact Joyce Dowell, Chief, Child Welfare Policy and Program Development Bureau at (916) 651-6160, or by email at Joyce.Dowell@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

LINNÉ STOUT, Chief
Child Protection and Family Support Branch