



A parent may not be ready to raise a child or start a family for various reasons. The Maryland Safe Haven Law allows them to surrender an unharmed newborn without fear of arrest or prosecution.

Maryland Safe Haven Program

- Unharmed Newborn Up to 60 Days Old
- Give to a Responsible Adult or Designated Facility
- No Arrest or Prosecution

Maryland Law Article
Courts and Judicial Proceedings §5-641



<http://dhs.maryland.gov/safe-haven/>



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Are you pregnant?

Did you just give birth?

Are you unable to care for your baby?

Do you know someone struggling with these concerns?

The Safe Haven Law protects the parent and gives an newborn a new home.





What is the purpose of the Safe Haven Program?

The Safe Haven Program is designed to protect a newborn from danger or death and to protect the mother or responsible adult from any legal action.

How or where can the newborn be handed over?

A designated facility is a Maryland hospital, a licensed medical provider, a police department/police barracks or fire company. Scan the QR code to view a list of Maryland's current designated facilities.

If the mother is too scared, can someone else take the newborn?

The Maryland Safe Haven law allows a mother of a newborn or responsible adult, designated by the mother, to leave an unharmed newborn, within 60 days of birth, at a Maryland Safe Haven designated facility. The responsible adult must be 18 years or older.



What does unharmed mean?

In this case, Unharmed is defined as no evidence of physical injury or failure to give proper care and attention to a newborn.

What should a mother or responsible adult say upon arrival at a designated facility?

The mother or responsible adult can say, "This is a Safe Haven baby." Staff at the designated facility may ask questions about the newborn's health and family health history, but you do not have to answer any questions if you don't want to. The medical history of the newborn will help medical and Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) staff do a better job of providing the necessary care.

NOTE: A direct handover must occur between the mother/responsible adult and a designated facility staff member, ensuring the newborn is never left unattended.

What happens next?

The newborn will receive any necessary medical attention before being discharged to the LDSS and placed for adoption.



What if the parent wishes to regain custody of their newborn?

The goal is to have the newborn placed with a permanent, stable family. However, if the newborn's parent changes their mind, the Local Department of Social Services can be contacted at 1-800-917-7383.

To learn more about Maryland's Safe Haven Program, contact your local Department of Social Services at 1-800-917-7383. All calls can be made anonymously.

For more information you may visit the Maryland Department of Human Services' website. (dhs.maryland.gov/safe-haven/).