



Infant Abandonment

Policy:

Article 5A, "Safe Surrender of Infants", of the North Carolina General Statute provides a mechanism for unwanted infants to be taken under temporary custody by a law enforcement officer, social services worker, healthcare provider, or EMS personnel if an infant is presented by the parent and are no more than 30 days old. Emergency Medical Services will accept and protect infants who are presented to EMS in this manner, until custody of the child can be released to the Department of Social Services. The provisions of this Article apply exclusively to safely surrendered infants as defined in G.S. 7B-101(19a).

A first responder, including a law enforcement officer, a **certified emergency medical services worker**, or a firefighter shall, without a court order, take into temporary custody an infant reasonably believed to be not more than 30 days of age that is voluntarily delivered to the individual by the infant's parent who does not express an intent to return for the infant.

"An individual who takes an infant into temporary custody under this subsection shall perform any act necessary to protect the physical health and well-being of the infant and shall immediately notify the department of social services. Any individual who takes an infant into temporary custody under this subsection may inquire as to the parents' identities and as to any relevant medical history, but the parent is not required to provide this information."

Purpose:

To provide:

- Protection to infants that are placed into the custody of EMS under this law
- Protection to EMS systems and personnel when confronted with this issue

Procedure:

1. Initiate the Pediatric Assessment Procedure.
2. Initiate Newly Born Protocol as appropriate.
3. Initiate other treatment as appropriate and transport to medical facility as per local protocol.
4. Keep infant warm.
5. Call local Department of Social Services or the county equivalent as soon as infant is stabilized.
6. Document protocols, procedures, and agency notifications in the PCR.