

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Child and Family Services Agency



**Newborn Safe Haven Annual Report 2012**

January 1, 2013

**Introduction**

*The Newborn Safe Haven Act of 2010* law (L18-158) allows a parent who resides in the District of Columbia to surrender a newborn infant less than 14 days old to staff at designated hospitals (Authorized Receiving Facilities) in the District confidentially and without fear of prosecution, if there is no evidence of child abuse or neglect. Hospitals are required to notify the Child and Family Services (CFSA) immediately when a newborn is surrendered under the law. Within 23 hours, CFSA will take custody of the newborn from the hospital. At this point, CFSA will provide foster care services to the newborn while seeking a permanent home through adoption.

The law requires annually on January 1<sup>st</sup> the submission of a status report giving an update on the number of newborns in the District of Columbia surrendered under the law within the year. This status report is being submitted to the Committee on Human Services to fulfill the requirement.

**Status Report**

The following are CFSA's responses to questions found in Section 107 "Status Report" in *The Newborn Safe Haven Act of 2010*.

**1. Number of newborns surrendered and dates of surrender.**

There were no newborns surrendered under the Newborn Safe Haven law in the District from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012. As earlier reported in the year, on January 15, 2012, an infant was found abandoned in Northeast Washington and pronounced dead. The cause of death; and the identity of the infant and parents were unknown at the time. The Metropolitan Police Department was investigating the infant's death as a homicide. We have no new updates on this case.

**2. Services provided to surrendered newborns.**

No newborns were surrendered under the law so therefore no services were provided.

**3. Outcome of the care provided for each surrendered newborn.**

See response for question 2.

**4. Number and disposition of cases of surrendered newborns.**

See response for question 2.

**Activities**

In conclusion as reported earlier in 2012, CFSA worked collaboratively with the DC Hospital Association and hospitals around implementing the law. The following activities occurred in 2011 and 2012:

- CFSA held a press conference on January 19, 2012 to inform the public of the new law.
- A link to the Newborn Safe Haven law can be accessed on CFSA's website at <http://cfsa.dc.gov>. There you will find a Safe Haven user and general information guide for consumer use.
- All fourteen hospitals that must comply with the law have posted required signage reflecting the toll free number (1-855-442-2229). CFSA staff answer calls at the toll free number.
- The final rules were published on September 16, 2011 in the D.C. Register (Vol 58/37).
- CFSA, with input from the DC Hospital Association and hospitals, developed an Authorized Receiving Facility Form for hospitals and CFSA use when a newborn is surrendered under the law.
- CFSA released an Administrative Issuance to guide practice for workers.