

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Newborn Safe Haven Program

Annual Status Report 2019

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D.C. Child and Family Services Agency

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

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Introduction

The Newborn Safe Haven Amendment Act of 2010 (D.C. Law 18-158; D.C. Official Code § 4–1451.01 et seq.) 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 or ARFs), in the District of Columbia, 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 Agency (CFSA) immediately when a newborn is surrendered under the law. CFSA takes custody of the newborn from the hospital within 23 hours of notice. CFSA then provides foster care services to the newborn while seeking a permanent home through adoption.

The law requires the Mayor to submit an annual status report giving an update on the number of newborns in the District of Columbia surrendered under the law within the reporting year. This status report to the Council of the District of Columbia fulfills the requirement.

Status Report

Following are CFSA's responses to questions found in the D.C. Official Code § 4–1451.07- Status Report section.

- **Number of newborns surrendered and dates of surrender**
There were no infants surrendered under the Newborn Safe Haven Amendment Act of 2010 in 2019.
- **Services provided to surrendered newborns**
In 2019, CFSA continued to support the pre-adoptive parent of the newborn surrendered on April 21, 2018 during the adoption process, identified in the 2018 annual status report.
- **Outcome of the care provided for each surrendered newborn**
The pre-adoptive parent filed an adoption petition on July 27, 2018.
- **Number and disposition of cases of surrendered newborns**
Adoption finalization occurred on April 10, 2019, for the newborn surrendered in 2018, at the Washington Hospital Center.

Activities

Information and trainings were facilitated by the staff responsible for the Newborn Safe Haven Program on the following dates:

- Presentation and dissemination of materials in a CFSA Management Meeting on April 3, 2019;
- Webinar training module was created in May 2019;
- Sixty-minute training was provided to the staff at the Office of Youth Empowerment on September 5, 2019; and
- Presentation to CFSA staff, contract social workers and resource parents, to highlight National Adoption Month was conducted on November 18, 2019.

CFSA is coordinating several trainings in 2020 to include the Child Protective Services Administration, the Office of Community Partnerships, and the Office of Youth Empowerment. These trainings will ensure that social workers are continuously aware of the policies and procedures relating to the Newborn Safe Haven Program. The training will be conducted by the staff responsible for the Newborn Safe Haven Program with the support of the CFSA Child Welfare Training Academy. The trainings will be offered at varied times and through various modalities to ensure all tours of duty are covered and to complement all learning styles.

Information about the program can be found on CFSA's website at <http://cfsa.dc.gov/service/safe-havens-newborns>. Haven locations can be found in the DC Safe Haven General Information publication found on CFSA's website.