



## Missouri's Safe Place for Newborns Law

Missouri's Safe Place for Newborns Law allows a parent to permanently give up a child less than 45 days old without criminal consequences as long as it's done safely and according to law.

### When a parent arrives with an infant, you need to:

- Confirm they are the parents (or acting on the parent's behalf)
- Confirm the infant is less than one year old
- Make sure they are aware their parental rights will be terminated\* and the decision is permanent
- Let the parent know the other parent has rights
- **IMMEDIATELY** take the child to the nearest hospital. Hospital staff will be able to treat the infant (if necessary) and are required to notify the Children's Division and the local juvenile office.

\*If the other parent wants custody of the child, he or she must take steps to establish parentage within 30 days after the juvenile officer has filed a public notice.

### Who can take custody of infants?

The child may only be left with certain professionals. You may take custody of the infant if you are a:

- Law enforcement officer (whether on or off duty)
- Firefighter
- Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)
- Hospital staff
- Maternity home staff
- Pregnancy center staff
- A volunteer at a hospital, maternity home or pregnancy center
- Any staff in a health care provider position while off duty at a hospital, maternity home or pregnancy center

Authorized personnel are immune from civil, criminal, and administrative liability for accepting physical custody of a child (up to one year old) as long as the person acts in good faith and arranges for transportation of the child to the nearest hospital.

### Questions?

For more information about the Missouri Safe Place for Newborns Law:

Visit <https://dss.mo.gov/cd/keeping-kids-safe/safe-place-for-newborns.htm>

or

Call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-392-3738