

Santa Clara County Safe Haven Task Force Actions
Recommendations *Requiring Additional Resources*

Media, Education and Outreach ☐ Policy and Legislation ☒ Public Safety ☐ Health and Human Services ☐

What is the Existing Problem?

SSB designated sites in Santa Clara County do not have a uniform protocol for the safe surrender of an infant.

Recommended Actions to Address the Problem: (How and who?) Identify responsible party/partners.

1. A uniform hospital and fire station protocol is necessary, whereby each type of facility handles surrenders in a consistent manner.
2. Identify key stakeholders, including fire fighters, hospitals/Hospital Council, perinatal social workers
3. The protocol should:
 - Make the safe surrender process as easy, accessible, and appropriately sensitive to the mother or surrendering party.
 - Emphasize the surrendering party's *confidentiality*.
 - Strengthen those mechanisms in place to *involve Child Protective Services (CPS)* as expediently as possible.
 - Including information on the *parental reunification* process allowed under the law.
 - Provide information and resources on *medical and mental health services*.
4. *Technical assistance* will be required to develop protocols
5. *Training* of personnel and staff likely to receive an infant is needed across designated sties
6. A *communication mechanism* within and across sites regarding procedures will be needed to ensure consistency and provide an opportunity for feedback and improvement after an incident.
7. Investigate whether phones can be placed outside fire stations in case they are on a call (this already exists at some fire stations).
8. Pursue the possibility of a special room/area at the hospital, clearly marked by logos, where the surrender can occur.
9. With regard to the *medical questionnaire*:
 - The mother should be encouraged to complete the medical questionnaire. However, her anonymity should be respected. She should be given the packet to complete the questionnaire and mail it to the hospital anonymously in a postage-paid envelope.
10. Keep development of the protocol at the local level (do not include in state legislation)

Additional Background Information to Support Recommendation (Why?):

An analysis of the implementation of Safe Haven Law in Santa Clara County reveals that SSB sites (hospitals and fire stations) do not have a uniform protocol of surrendering an infant. The protocol needs to ensure protection of the mother's anonymity, ease of access for the mother, and safety of the infant. Secondly, mechanisms to ensure staff are trained appropriately.

Santa Clara County Safe Haven Task Force Actions
Recommendations to Improve/Enhance Current Practices

Media, Education and Outreach ☐ Policy and Legislation ☒ Public Safety ☐ Health and Human Services ☐

What is the Existing Problem?

Community clinics are trusted, culturally sensitive and conveniently located health care providers; however, they are not staffed 24 hours a day.

Recommended Actions to Address the Problem: (How and who?) Identify responsible party/partners.

1. Emphasize community clinics role in the safe surrender education process.
2. Ask community clinics to develop their own protocols and staff training in case a safe surrender occurs there.

Additional Background Information to Support Recommendation (Why?):

Our Subcommittee decided not to recommend site expansion, largely because community clinics are not open 24 hours a day. However, in acknowledgement of the role that community clinics play in providing health care services, the Subcommittee recommends that they play a prominent role in the education process.

Santa Clara County Safe Haven Task Force Actions
Recommendations to Improve/Enhance Current Practices

Media, Education and Outreach ☐ Policy and Legislation ☒ Public Safety ☐ Health and Human Services ☐

What is the Existing Problem?
Extending the Law's Sunset.
Recommended Actions to Address the Problem: (How and who?) Identify responsible party/partners.
The County of Santa Clara can sponsor legislation to extend the sunset of the safely surrendered baby law.
Additional Background Information to Support Recommendation (Why?):
The Subcommittee felt that there might have been better alternatives than the Safe Surrendered Baby law (such as encouraging the existing relinquishment process). However, since the law is already enacted and there has been some amount of public education, the Subcommittee felt it is appropriate to sponsor an extension of the law, including any other provisions suggested by the Task Force.

Santa Clara County Safe Haven Task Force Actions
NOT RECOMMENDED BY POLICY/LEGISLATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Media, Education and Outreach ☐ Policy and Legislation ☒ Public Safety ☐ Health and Human Services ☐

What is the Existing Problem?
Currently, only babies 3 days or younger can be surrendered.
Recommended Actions to Address the Problem: (How and who?) Identify responsible party/partners.
Additional Background Information to Support Recommendation (Why?):
The Subcommittee believes the current age forces a mother or family in a desperate situation to surrender the infant sooner than later thereby ensuring the infant will receive medical care. The group did not believe that the age limit had been demonstrated to be a problem that requires "fixing." Planned Parenthood was not in agreement with this decision.

Santa Clara County Safe Haven Task Force Actions
NOT RECOMMENDED BY POLICY/LEGISLATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Media, Education and Outreach ☐ Policy and Legislation ☒ Public Safety ☐ Health and Human Services ☐

What is the Existing Problem?
Potentially conflicting role by Sunnyvale Public Safety Officers.
Recommended Actions to Address the Problem: (How and who?) Identify responsible party/partners.
Additional Background Information to Support Recommendation (Why?):
The City of Sunnyvale believes that their Public Safety Officers, who serve as both firefighters and law enforcement officials, face a conflict if Sunnyvale Fire Stations are designated “safe surrender” sites. The Subcommittee hopes that staff and counsel from both the City of Sunnyvale and the County can continue to work towards a solution to this potential conflict.

Santa Clara County Safe Haven Task Force Actions
ADDITIONAL ISSUES WHICH WERE NOT DISCUSSED BY SUBCOMMITTEE

Media, Education and Outreach ☐ Policy and Legislation ☒ Public Safety ☐ Health and Human Services ☐

What is the Existing Problem?
Require County Departments to display a poster on the “Safe Surrendered Baby Law” and all employees receive specific information regarding this law and the procedures for safely surrendering an infant.
Recommended Actions to Address the Problem: (How and who?) Identify responsible party/partners.
Additional Background Information to Support Recommendation (Why?):
One of the contributing factors to discarding infants in public places without care and supervision is lack of community education on this law. If more people know about this law, the chances should increase that more infants will be safely surrendered.

Santa Clara County Safe Haven Task Force Actions
Recommendations *Require Additional Resources*

Media, Education and Outreach ☐ Policy and Legislation ☐ Public Safety XX Health and Human Services ☐

What is the Existing Problem?
There is no consistent signage and first responders' kits available for Safe Haven Sites.
Recommended Actions to Address the Problem: (How and who?) Identify responsible party/partners.
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "Newborn Safe Surrender Kit" and signs are to be provided to all jurisdictions by the County. (County Safe Haven coordinator)2. Training videos are to be provided to all jurisdictions by the County. (County Safe Haven coordinator)3. Each jurisdiction is to conduct its own departmental Safe Haven training, utilizing County-provided Kits, signs, and videos. (All SCC jurisdictions)
Additional Background Information to Support Recommendation (Why?):
<p>The State (CA) has signs and training videos already produced. There is no need to reproduce these, since they are all available for purchase.</p> <p>Jurisdictions would appreciate all resources (kits, signs, videos) to be provided by the County.</p>