



RUSSELLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
POLICY MANUAL

Policy Number:
Section:
Original Date:
Revised Date:

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure standard for response to a surrendered child or Safe Haven Baby Box (SHBB) alarm and subsequent management of the surrendered child.

POLICY

The Arkansas Safe Haven Act allows for the legal surrender of children 30 days old or younger. Fire departments are described as a legal option for surrender in the law. To facilitate anonymous and safe surrendering of a child, the department has installed and operates a Safe Haven Baby Box that provides citizens in crisis an avenue to surrender a child in a manner that requires no interaction and maintains anonymity for the parent. In the event a child is surrendered at a fire department facility the following procedures should be followed to ensure the transfer of care is managed in a manner that protects both the child and parent. This policy will focus on the response to a SHBB alarm but will also apply to a surrender encountered at any facility.

Activation of the SHBB alarm shall cause the 9-1-1 center to dispatch a Baby Box Alarm to the box location / fire station regardless of members being on the air or in quarters. Alarms received while in quarters shall be acknowledged by placing the units on scene and proceeding with management of the incident. Units dispatched while on the air will respond emergent to the activation. Once on scene the following steps must be followed:

1. Retrieve infant from box or from parent. If a parent is present during the transition be mindful of the fact that they may also need medical attention or supportive care if they are experiencing an acute crisis. The parent must be treated with compassion as this is likely a critical time in their life.
2. Initiate BLS/ALS care for the child. The infant should receive a complete exam with relevant treatments provided as outlined in the Russellville Fire Department's treatment protocols.
3. Contact Hospital. Notification should be made to the receiving hospital soon after the destination has been selected.
4. Transport infant to the most appropriate hospital per local EMS transport protocols. Primary hospital destination for surrendered infants will be Saint Mary's Regional Health System if the patient is stable. If the infant requires immediate care or is presenting with critical findings, transport should be initiated to the closest most appropriate hospital.
5. Transfer of care at receiving hospital. Patient report must include reporting that the infant was legally surrendered under the Arkansas Safe Haven Act.
6. Ensure the hospital contacts the Department of Child and Family Services Hotline 1-800-482-5964. In the event the hospital will be delayed making this contact the lead paramedic should make the call to ensure proper notifications have transpired.

Approved

Fire Chief



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Documentation of the surrender must be completed on the Surrender Process Document with a copy of the document left with the receiving facility. The document should be completed in its entirety with any critical or pertinent notes provided for each step of the process. Further reporting of the incident will take place under the existing policies regarding EMS and incident reporting. Upon returning to service from a baby box surrender event, notifications must be made to Safe Haven Baby Boxes within two hours at 260-750-3668.

Face to face surrender at a fire department facility regardless of the presence of a SHBB should follow the same procedures described above. In addition to the steps outlined if contact is made with the surrendering parent it is important to provide them with the following packet of information which includes information for a mother in crisis, including parental rights, medical information, Safe Haven Registry document, and No Blame, No Shame, No Names brochure. The listed documents should be provided in English and Spanish. If possible an attempt should be made to obtain the information requested on the Safe Haven Registry form. If the parent is not receptive to providing the information the packet should be sent with them for review at their leisure. Information is provided within the packet should they decide to provide any information in the future.

The SHBB alarm system will automatically reset upon removal of the infant. This should take place within 60 seconds. Upon return to the station the SHBB should be inspected to ensure the proper equipment, paperwork, and supplies have been restocked. The bassinet and interior of the cabinet should be sanitized during this process.

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T. Kirk Stone".

Fire Chief