



Iowa Department of Human Services

Kim Reynolds
Governor

Adam Gregg
Lt. Governor

Jerry R. Foxhoven
Director

August 4, 2017

Newborn Boy Declared Safe Haven Baby State Uses Safe Haven Procedures 29th time

(Des Moines, Iowa) - Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) officials have used the state's safe haven procedures for the 29th time since the law went into effect.

A boy was born July 25, 2017, at an Iowa hospital and the infant was released to the custody of the DHS.

A court hearing to terminate parental rights is held within a month. Specific details are withheld in order to protect the identity of the parents and child.

"Under the safe haven law, the life and health of newborns is protected," said Jerry R. Foxhoven, director of DHS. "In addition, parents in crisis are protected from prosecution for abandonment, allowing them to safely leave an infant at a hospital or health care facility, no questions asked."

Through Iowa's safe haven law, parents have the option to safely hand over custody of babies age 14 days or younger without fear of prosecution for abandonment. The parent, or their authorized representative, can leave the newborn at a hospital or health care facility, and can remain anonymous.

The safe haven law was approved in the wake of a high-profile case in 2001 involving a teen mother in eastern Iowa who killed her home-delivered newborn. Infants who are safe haven babies are placed with currently-approved foster or adoptive families.

If you are interested in becoming a foster or adoptive parent, please visit <https://www.iowakidsnet.com/>

For more information on the safe haven procedure: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/safe-haven>