

Joe Lombardo
Governor

Richard Whitley, MS
Director



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.



Marla McDade
Williams, MPA
Administrator

MTL # 0512-07082025

TO: Frank Prado, Director – Clark County Family Services
Laurie Jackson, Social Services Manager V – DCFS – District Offices
Mandy Hall, Social Services Manager V – DCFS -District Offices
Ryan Gustafson, Division Director – Washoe County Human Services Agency

FROM: Betsey Crumrine, Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services

POLICY DISTRIBUTION

Enclosed find the following policy for distribution to all applicable staff within your organization:

0512 Safe Haven

This policy is/was effective: 07/08/2025

- ☐ This policy is new. Please review the policy in its entirety
- ☐ This policy replaces the following policy(s): MTL # _____ - _____ Policy Name: _____
- ☐ This policy has been revised. Please see below for the type of revision:
 - ☐ This is a significant policy revision. Please review this policy in its entirety.
 - ☐ This is a minor policy revision: (List page number & summary of change):
 - ☐ A policy form has been revised: (List form, page number and summary of change):
- ☒ This policy has been reviewed for statewide compliance.

NOTE:

- Please read the policy in its entirety and note any areas that are additionally required by your agency to be in compliance with the policy enclosed.
- This is an **ALL STAFF MEMO** and it is the responsibility of the person listed above to disseminate the policy enclosed to appropriate staff within his/her organization and to ensure compliance.
- The most current version of this policy is posted on the DCFS Website at the following address: <http://dcfs.nv.gov/Policies>
Please check the table of contents on this page for the link to the chapter you are interested in.

CC:
Wonswayla Mackey (won@clarkcountynv.gov)
DFSPandP@Clarkcountynv.gov

Maria Hickey (mhickey@dcfs.nv.gov)
Kim Martin (ksmartin@washoecounty.gov)

0512 Safe Haven Response

Policy Approval Clearance Record

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Statewide Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Modified Policy
<input type="checkbox"/> DCFS Rural Region Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> This policy supersedes:
Date Policy Effective:	06/09/2025
Attorney General Representative Review:	01/07/2025
DCFS Deputy Administrator Approval	02/24/2025
DMG Original Approval	02/07/2018
DMG Approved Revisions	07/08/2025

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Policy Statement: The parent of a newborn child who is or appears to be no more than thirty (30) days old can leave the newborn child with a provider of emergency services without the obligation to return to care for the newborn child. The Safe Haven policy is a standardized process for consistent decision-making methods regarding the care of the newborn child and the handling of a Safe Haven case.

Purpose: Safe Haven Law establishes a safe process for parents to leave an infant with a provider of emergency services without an obligation to return to care for the child. Any identifying information relating to the parent who delivered the child to the provider must not be transferred to the Child Welfare Agency, regardless of whether the parent has requested anonymity. The Safe Haven Law also establishes immunity from civil and criminal liability for persons who take possession of an abandoned infant. A newborn child cannot be considered to have suffered abuse and/or neglect and cannot be considered to be in need of protection solely for having been delivered to a provider of emergency services in accordance with the Safe Haven Law. A parent who delivers their child in accordance with the Safe Haven Law may not be criminally or civilly prosecuted for child abuse and/or neglect for the sole fact that the parent delivered or allowed the child to be delivered in accordance with the Safe Haven Law.

AUTHORITY

Federal: [42 USC 622\(B\)](#); [42 USC 629a \(f\)](#);

NRS: [432B.020](#); [432B.140](#); [432B.160](#); [432B.330](#); [432B.393 \(3\)\(f\)](#); [432B.470](#); [432B.510](#); [432B.520 \(5\)](#); [432B.540 \(1\) \(b\)](#); [432B.550](#); [432B.560](#); [432B.580 \(3\)](#); [432B.630](#)

NAC: [NAC 432B.140](#); [NAC 432B.150](#); [NAC 432B.155](#); [NAC 432B.160](#); [NAC 432B.290](#); [NAC 432B.360](#)

DEFINITIONS

Abuse or Neglect of a child: “Abuse or neglect of a child” as defined in [NRS432b.020](#):

1. "Abuse or neglect of a child" means, except as otherwise provided in subsection 2:
 - a. Physical or mental injury of a nonaccidental nature;
 - b. Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation; or
 - c. Negligent treatment or maltreatment as set forth in [NRS 432B.140](#), of a child caused or allowed by a person responsible for the welfare of the child under circumstances which indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm.
2. A child is not abused or neglected, nor is the health or welfare of the child harmed or threatened for the sole reason that:
 - a. The parent of the child delivers the child to a provider of emergency services pursuant to [NRS 432B.630](#), if the parent complies with the requirements of paragraph (a) of subsection 3 of that section; or
 - b. The parent or guardian of the child, in good faith, selects and depends upon nonmedical remedial treatment for such child, if such treatment is recognized and permitted under the laws of this State in lieu of medical treatment. This paragraph does not limit the court in ensuring that a child receive a medical examination and treatment pursuant to [NRS 62E.280](#).
3. As used in this section, "allow" means to do nothing to prevent or stop the abuse or neglect of a child in circumstances where the person knows or has reason to know that a child is abused or neglected.

Agency which provides child welfares services:

1. In a county whose population is less than 100,000, the local office of the Division of Child and Family Services: or
2. In a county whose population is 100,000 or more, the agency of the county which provides or arranges for necessary child welfare services.
3. May also be referred to as "Agency" or "Child Welfare Agency."

Delivering Parent: A parent who delivers a child to an emergency services provider as part of the Safe Haven process.

Child Welfare Services: As defined by [NRS 432B.044](#), includes, without limitation: 1. Protective Services, investigations of abuse or neglect and assessments; 2. Foster care services, as defined in [NRS 432.010](#); and 3. Services related to adoption.

Intake Worker: The state/county child welfare agency worker who takes the report. The term does not refer to a dispatch or an Emergency Response Team Worker.

Non-delivering Parent: For a child who was delivered to a provider of emergency services pursuant to [NRS 432B.630](#), a parent other than the parent who delivered the child to a provider of emergency services.

Provider of Emergency Services: A hospital, an obstetric center or an independent center for emergency medical care licensed pursuant to chapter [449 of NRS](#).

1. A public fire-fighting agency, including without limitation, volunteer fire departments;
2. A law enforcement agency; or
3. An ambulance service that holds a permit issued pursuant to the provisions of chapter [450B of NRS](#).
4. An agency which provides child welfare services. (definition for this policy only)

STANDARDS/PROCEDURES

A Safe Haven referral becomes a report upon the child welfare agency's determination that a child is delivered to a provider of emergency services pursuant to [NRS 432B.630](#) and is in need of protection.

1. A person who is the legal parent of a newborn child can leave the newborn child with a provider of emergency services; however, the newborn child must appear to be or is less than thirty (30) days old.
2. Regardless of whether the newborn child was delivered to a provider of emergency services or a Child Welfare Agency, the Child Welfare Agency must determine whether there is any information to suspect that the child was subjected to abuse or neglect to determine if Safe Haven applies. If there is any information to suspect that the newborn child was subjected to the abuse or neglect, Safe Haven does not apply.
3. An infant is affected by a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder or prenatal substance use disorder or as having withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal substance exposure. does not automatically disqualify Safe Haven. When the Child Welfare Agency receives information that the infant is substance affected, the Child Welfare Agency must consider whether there is an allegation of abuse or neglect that has occurred after the birth of the infant to determine if Safe Haven applies.

To learn more about requirements that a Provider of Emergency Services must follow when a newborn child is delivered refer to [NRS 432B.630](#).

In circumstances when a newborn is delivered to a Child Welfare Agency as the Provider of Emergency Services, the Child Welfare Agency, shall:

1. Take immediate possession of the child, if the child is or appears to not be more than 30 days old and the parent does not express an intent to return for the child pursuant to [NRS 432B.630](#).
2. As soon as practical, but not later than 24 hours after the Child Welfare Agency takes possession of the child, the Child Welfare Agency must report the possession of the child to their local law enforcement agency.
 - a. Pursuant to [NRS 432B.630\(c\)](#), the law enforcement agency is responsible to notify the Clearinghouse (Nevada State Advocate for Missing and Exploited Children, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children) and investigate further, if necessary and use any other resources to determine whether the child has been reported as a missing child.
 - i. The law enforcement agency is responsible to inform the Child Welfare Agency of its determination.
 - ii. If the law enforcement agency does not inform the Child Welfare Agency of its determination, pursuant to [NRS 432B.630\(c\)](#), regarding whether the child has been reported as a missing child, the Child Welfare Agency must contact the law enforcement agency to obtain the information about their determination.
3. Whenever possible, the Child Welfare Agency shall inform the parent that:
 - a. By allowing the Child Welfare Agency to take possession of the child, the parent is presumed to have abandoned the child;

- b. The parent who delivered the child to the provider of emergency services waives any right to notice of a hearing pursuant to [NRS 128.060](#) or [128.070](#) or [432B.410](#) to [432B.590](#), inclusive.; and
 - c. Unless the parent contacts the local Child Welfare Agency, action will be taken to terminate his or her parental rights regarding the child.
4. The Child Welfare Agency must perform any act necessary to maintain and protect the physical health and safety of the child. The Child Welfare Agency must immediately deliver the child to the hospital, obstetric center, or other center for emergency care.
5. Nothing is required of the delivering parent. Any identifying information relating to the parent who delivered the child to the provider must not be transferred to the Child Welfare Agency, regardless of whether the parent has requested anonymity. However, the Child Welfare Agency can record any information that a parent is willing to share, such as the child's health, race, and date of birth, place of birth or the medical history of the parents. This could be useful in caring for the child.
6. Refer to [Statewide Policy 0506 Intake and Priority Response Times](#) for additional information about completing a Safe Haven Report and priority response time assignments.

In circumstances when the newborn is delivered to a provider of emergency services that is not the Child Welfare Agency, the Child Welfare Agency must:

1. Immediately place the newborn child into protective custody upon the receipt of a report of child abandonment, pursuant to [NRS 432B.630](#). Upon the receipt of the Safe Haven Response report from the provider of emergency services, the Child Welfare Agency shall:
 - a. Determine whether there is any information to suspect that the child was subjected to abuse or neglect to determine if Safe Haven applies. If there is any information to suspect that the newborn child was subjected to the abuse or neglect, Safe Haven does not apply.
 - b. Refer to [Statewide Policy 0506 Intake and Priority Response Times](#) for additional information about completing a Safe Haven Report and priority response time assignments.
 - c. Take action to attain safety and permanency for the child.
 - d. Follow-up with their local law enforcement agency and/or with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) to ensure the child is not reported as a missing child.

If the Child Welfare Agency is responding to the parent who delivered the child, the Child Welfare Agency shall:

1. Communicate the Child Welfare Agency's intentions of placing the child into protective custody and provide the parent with a *Parent's Guide to Child Protective Services*.
2. Subject to the provisions of subsection 3, the delivering parent may voluntarily provide information about family medical history, Native American heritage, demographic information, and information regarding the non-delivering parent.
3. Any identifying information relating to the parent who delivered the child to the provider must not be transferred to the Child Welfare Agency, regardless of whether the parent has requested anonymity.

Responding to the Non-Delivering Parent (when the non-delivering natural parent is identified):

1. Diligent Search: If a non-delivering's parent identity is known, the Child Welfare Agency shall conduct a diligent search as outlined in the [Statewide Policy 1001 Diligent Search Process and Notice](#).
2. Upon determining parentage, the Child Welfare Agency should assess the parent's ability to care for the child, based on the Child Welfare Agency's business practice. If deemed appropriate, the Child Welfare Agency may provide services to the non-delivering parent.
3. In situations where a parent who is the non-delivering parent is considered for possible placement, the Child Welfare Agency should consult with their legal counsel in their jurisdiction to determine if/when parentage should be established prior to placement.

Court Process

Issuance of Summons for a Hearing Held on a Petition Filed Pursuant to [NRS 432B.490](#)

1. If the child was delivered to a Safe Haven location pursuant to [NRS 432B.630](#), the delivering parent shall be deemed to have waived any right to notice of the hearing conducted pursuant to [NRS 432B.470](#).
2. If the Child Welfare Agency knows the identification and location of the non-delivering parent, summons for a hearing held on a petition filed pursuant to [NRS 432B.490](#) must be served on the non-delivering parent, as provided in [NRS 432B.520 \(4\)](#)
3. If the location or identification of the non-delivering parent is unknown, the summons on a petition filed pursuant to [NRS 432B.490](#) must be served on that parent, as soon as possible as to not delay permanency, by publication at least once a week for 3 consecutive weeks in a newspaper published in the county. The failure of the non-delivering parent to appear in response to the summons that is served by publication pursuant to this paragraph shall be deemed to constitute a waiver by that parent of any further notice of the proceedings that would otherwise be required.
4. The parent who delivered the child to a Safe Haven location pursuant to [NRS 432B.630](#) shall be deemed to have waived any right to notice.
5. If the non-delivering parent fails to appear and does not subsequently contact the Child Welfare Agency, then court reports do not need to be sent to that parent, per [NRS 432B.580\(3\)](#).
6. Unless the delivering parent contacts the local Child Welfare Agency, action will be taken to terminate parental rights.
 - a. Under NRS [432B.393\(3\)\(f\)](#), a Child Welfare Agency isn't required to provide reasonable efforts if a **court finds** that the child was a Safe Haven child.
 - b. The court is not required to order child support.

Termination of Parental Rights Petition or Motion

1. If the non-delivering parent's identity is known to the Child Welfare Agency, the Child Welfare Agency has an obligation to serve the parent for termination of parental rights (TPR) hearing, if the TPR case was initiated by filing a petition pursuant to the provisions of NRS Chapter 128. If TPR motion is filed pursuant to the provisions of [NRS 432B.5901](#) to [432B.5907](#), inclusive, and notice of all hearings held pursuant to the provisions of NRS Chapter 432B has been waived pursuant to [NRS 432B.520\(5\)](#), then the Child Welfare Agency does not have any obligation to serve

the parent on the TPR motion. Alternatively, the Child Welfare Agency can obtain a relinquishment pursuant to [NRS 127.070](#).

Semiannual Review/Hearing to Review Placement and Annual Permanency Hearing

1. Notice of review hearings for non-delivering parent is also waived by 520(5), if publication was done at the onset of the case.

Note: If at any time the child is suspected of having Native American heritage, please refer to [Statewide Policy 0504 Indian Child Welfare Act](#) for further instruction.

Documentation: The agencies must document in UNITY within five (5) business days.

Case File Documentation: Follow Agency business practice for required case file documentation.

UNITY Documentation (electronic)

Applicable UNITY Screen	Data Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Case Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All activities not documented in this safety assessment.; Supervisory Staffing's
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intake Form (INT200)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary Form to complete Intake Assessment

JURISDICTIONAL ACTION

Development of Internal Policies:

Child Welfare Agencies shall develop internal policies and procedures as necessary and adhere to any statewide policies when developing internal policies.

STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

The State will provide technical assistance regarding program development and implementation to the Child Welfare Agencies.

POLICY CROSS REFERENCE

Policies:

[506 Intake and Priority Response Times](#)
[1001 Diligent Search Process and Notice](#)
[0504 Indian Child Welfare Act \(ICWA\)](#)

History and Updates: This policy was effective on 2/7/2018. Policy revised 06/09/2025.

ATTACHMENTS

N/A