

Mary Washington Hospital Safe Haven Care

The Safe Haven Law was implemented throughout the United States to help prevent abandonment of infants into dangerous situations.

The law states, *“Any infant 14 days or younger who is safely delivered to a Safe Haven by one of the infant’s parents, the parent shall have a defense in any prosecution of the parent based solely upon the parent’s decision to deliver the child to a Safe Haven.”*

Virginia has established safe locations where a parent may relinquish the care of their infant. The Safe Havens for infants are:

- Police Stations
- Fire and Rescue Stations
- Hospitals
- **Emergency Departments (freestanding and hospital-based)**

The Emergency Department at Mary Washington Hospital is a Safe Haven. We accept any child regardless of age into our Safe Haven. We provide a safe and caring alternative when a parent chooses not to keep their child.

The Emergency Department has postcards located in the triage waiting room brochure holder and at the reception desk. The postcard is to be completed by the parent relinquishing the infant. It is **not required** but will help alert care providers of any medical conditions and/or pertinent medical history. The postcard can be completed at the time of relinquishment or mailed back later. Postage is prepaid.

The following sign is posted at the Emergency Department triage entrance.



Any Questions regarding Safe Haven can be directed to the Emergency/Trauma Clinical Nurse Specialist at 540.741.2122.