
Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection

338.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the proper managing of incidents of newborn infant abandonment according to the Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act (325 ILCS 2/10).

338.1.1 DEFINITIONS

- **Newborn Infant** - A child who a licensed physician reasonably believes is 30 days old or less at the time the child is initially relinquished to a hospital, police station, fire station, or emergency medical facility, and who is not an abused or a neglected child.
- **Relinquish** - To bring a newborn infant, who a licensed physician reasonably believes is 30 days old or less, to a hospital, police station, fire station, or emergency medical facility and to leave the infant with personnel of the facility, if the person leaving does not express an intent to return for the infant or states that he or she will not return for the infant. In the case of a mother who gives birth to an infant in a hospital, the mother's act of leaving the newborn infant at the hospital (i) without expressing an intent to return for the infant or (ii) stating that she will not return for the infant is not a "relinquishment".
- **Temporary Protective Custody** - The temporary placement of a newborn infant within a hospital or medical facility out of the custody of the infant's parent.
- **Police Station** - As it relates to this policy, the municipal building.

338.2 ACCEPTANCE

Officers must accept a newborn infant relinquished at the Department (325 ILCS 2/20 (c)). The State of Illinois defines a newborn infant as a child who a licensed physician reasonably believes is 30 days old or less at the time the child is initially relinquished (325 ILCS 2/10). Although a person relinquishing a newborn infant retains the right to limited immunity and anonymity, officers should request the person's personal information. Absent any other information, officers should attempt to obtain any known medical information about the newborn infant. Any information obtained should be documented in the report and, if appropriate, transmitted to the hospital or medical facility to which the newborn infant is taken.

If there is no evidence of abuse or neglect of the newborn infant, the relinquishing person has the right to remain anonymous and leave the premises at any time without being pursued or followed. The act of relinquishing a newborn infant does not, in and of itself, constitute a basis for a finding of abuse, neglect or abandonment. If there is suspected abuse or neglect that is not based solely on the newborn infant's relinquishment, the relinquishing person no longer has the right to remain anonymous (325 ILCS 2/30).

338.3 MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

After accepting a relinquished newborn infant the officer will request paramedics for a medical evaluation and transportation to the nearest hospital (325 ILCS 2/20 (c)). If the infant is not being

Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection

transported by the paramedics, the officer will see that transportation of the infant to the nearest hospital is accomplished as soon as transportation can be arranged. Newborn infants will not be transported in a department vehicle equipped with a prisoner screen or in any department vehicle without the appropriate child safety restraint and/or which does not allow for the proper placement of such child safety restraint.

338.4 NOTICE TO RELINQUISHING PERSON

When accepting a newborn infant, officers will offer the relinquishing person an information packet prepared and maintained by the Department for this purpose (325 ILCS 2/35). If possible, the employee will also inform the relinquishing person of the following:

- His/her acceptance of the information is completely voluntary.
- Registration with the Illinois Adoption Registry and Medical Information Exchange is voluntary.
- He/she will remain anonymous if they complete a Denial of Information Exchange.
- He/she has the option to provide medical information only and still remain anonymous.
- By relinquishing the child anonymously, he/she will have to petition the court of jurisdiction if he/she desires to prevent the termination of parental rights and regain custody of the child.

338.4.1 SUPERVISOR NOTIFICATION

When accepting a newborn infant, officers will notify their immediate supervisor as soon as practical.

338.4.2 DOCUMENTATION

When accepting a newborn infant, officers will generate a report and document all pertinent information.

338.4.3 REPORTING

- If there is no evidence of abuse or neglect of the relinquished newborn infant, a report will be completed using UCR code 1755 - Child Abandonment.
- If there is evidence of abuse or neglect of the relinquished newborn infant, a report will be completed using UCR code 1755 - Child Abandonment and any other proper UCR code for appropriate criminal incident. Investigation personnel will be contacted for appropriate follow-up investigation.
- In either case, the reporting officer shall make an immediate report to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Hotline at 1-800-25ABUSE (1-800-252-2873).

338.5 RIGHT OF PARENT TO RETURN

If the parent of a relinquished newborn infant returns to reclaim the infant within 72 hours after relinquishing the infant at the Department, an officer must inform the parent of the name and location of the hospital where the infant was transported (325 ILCS 2/20 (c)).

Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection

338.6 INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

Employees will not publicly disclose any information concerning the relinquishment of a newborn infant and the individuals involved, except as otherwise provided by law (325 ILCS 2/37).

338.7 INVESTIGATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Neither a child protective investigation nor a criminal investigation should be initiated solely because a newborn infant is relinquished (325 ILCS 2/25 (c)).

After accepting a newborn infant, or upon being contacted to assist in regards to a newborn infant relinquished elsewhere, the handling employee should take the necessary steps to ensure that the infant is not a missing child.

If there is suspected child abuse or neglect that is not based solely on the newborn infant's relinquishment, as mandated reporters under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act officers shall report their observations (325 ILCS 2/25(b)). In this instance, officers shall begin their criminal investigation.

338.8 REQUIRED SIGNAGE

The Administration Division Commander will ensure that an appropriate sign is posted in a conspicuous place on the exterior of the police facility informing persons that a newborn infant may be relinquished at the facility. The sign and its placement will comply with the prescribed specifications to ensure statewide uniformity (325 ILCS 2/22).