

September 30, 2003

To: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

STATUS REPORT ON SAFE HAVEN TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

On June 4, 2002, your Board adopted the Safe Haven Task Force's recommendations for more effectively implementing the Newborn Abandonment Law (SB 1368), also referred to as the "Safely Surrendered Baby (SSB) Law" or the "Safe Haven Law;" and designated the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) as the lead department for purposes of staffing this effort, and instructed my office to coordinate efforts through the Children's Planning Council (CPC) and the Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN). Additionally, your Board instructed me to report back to your Board on a quarterly basis on the status of the implementation of the recommendations. This serves as the fifth and final status report, reflecting full implementation of the task force recommendations.

During the past quarter, July through September 2003, the following key activities have occurred:

- **Additional municipal fire departments were designated as Safe Surrender sites.** On August 25 and September 2, 2003, the Board of Supervisors adopted motions designating Compton and La Verne fire departments as Safe Surrender sites. On September 30, the Board will consider a motion to designate the South Pasadena Fire Department as a Safe Surrender site. To date, 350 municipal fire stations have been designated as Safe Surrender sites.

- **County-sponsored legislation signed into law by Governor Davis.** On July 31, 2003, Governor Davis signed into law SB 139, County-sponsored legislation intended to clarify and strengthen provisions in the Safely Surrendered Baby (SSB) Law.
- **Public information materials on the SSB Law distributed to County departments and community-based organizations (CBOs).** In July 2003, First 5 LA and DCFS, with the support of the CAO, distributed customized information packets to County health and human service departments and 5,000 CBOs that provide services to children and families Countywide to better educate the public about the Law.
- **County-sponsored training module developed to educate the public on the SSB Law.** On September 5, 2003, the County issued a standardized training module to be used by all County departments and CBOs to educate staff and the families served by these agencies about the SSB Law.

A more detailed matrix indicating the implementation status for each of the adopted recommendations is attached. While this represents the final status report to the Board, the County, with the support of First 5 LA and ICAN, will continue its efforts to educate the public and train staff about the Law, track key data on safe surrenders and abandoned newborns to identify policy improvements to the Law, and provide key information to the public on the Law through the County's Web Page, www.babysafela.org, public information efforts, and the Speakers' Bureau.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or your staff may contact Deena Margolis at (213) 974-4604 or Jeff Wong at (213) 974-4129.

DEJ:ASD:DM

Attachment

c: CPC
First 5 LA
ICAN
Safe Haven Task Force

County Implementation of Newborn Abandonment Law (“Safely Surrendered Baby Law”)

**Safe Haven Task Force Recommendations
Status Report: Fifth Quarter (July 2003 to September 2003)**

Safe Haven Task Force Recommendation	Deliverables	Roles	Results
<p><u>Recommendation 1:</u> Request the District Attorney and County Counsel – in consultation with the Children’s Planning Council (CPC), Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN), the Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC), and other appropriate entities – to: (a) develop recommendations for amendments to the Newborn Abandonment Law – SB 1368 (“Safe Haven Law”) that can contribute to its more effective implementation, including: 1) assuring the confidentiality and exploring the potential for the anonymity of the parent, 2) requiring all hospitals with emergency rooms and all other designated Safe Surrender sites to post uniform identifying Safe Surrender site markers, 3) considering extending the age of a newborn who can be safely surrendered from 72 hours to five days old, 4) expanding the designation of Safe Surrender sites to include, at a minimum, hospitals without emergency departments and County fire stations, and 5) expanding the “Good Samaritan Law” to include adults who assist others to safely surrender their babies; and (b) work with the California State Department of Social Services (CDSS) and other California counties’ representatives on a State-convened task force to finalize a legislative package to effect these amendments to SB 1368.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present recommendations for amendments to CDSS Legal and Policy Work Group. 2. Participate on State convened task force to finalize a legislative package to effect amendments. 	<p><u>Lead:</u> District Attorney (DA), County Counsel</p> <p><u>Support:</u> CPC, ICAN, HASC, Chief Administrative Office (CAO), Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)</p>	<p>On July 31, 2003, Governor Davis signed into law SB 139, County-sponsored legislation intended to clarify and strengthen provisions in the Safely Surrendered Baby (SSB) Law. SB 139 improves the SSB Law by: 1) protecting the confidentiality of a parent who surrenders a child; 2) requiring all safe surrender sites to post uniform signage as developed by the County of Los Angeles in consultation with the State; 3) requiring a safe surrender site to notify child protective services as soon as possible after an infant is surrendered; 4) requiring child protective services to report information regarding all safe surrenders to the California Missing Children Clearinghouse and National Crime Information Center; and 5) clarifying that possession of the ankle bracelet identification does not establish parentage or a right to custody of the child.</p> <p>The County will continue to monitor local implementation efforts and advocate for additional clarifying provisions to the Law as necessary.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 2: Consider designating the following public entities as Safe Haven sites in Los Angeles County: (a) County and municipal fire stations, (b) County hospitals without emergency departments, (c) County health clinics, and (d) the County's Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs); and instruct the County Fire Chief and the Director of Health Services (DHS) – in consultation with the Sheriff, the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs' Association, and the Los Angeles Fire Chiefs' Association – to determine the feasibility of implementing these new Safe Haven sites, including a timeline and cost considerations, and report back to the Board within 60 days.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feasibility study of designating and implementing new Safe Haven sites, including a timeline and cost considerations. 2. Board designation of additional Safe Haven sites. 	<p>Lead: Fire, DHS</p> <p>Support: Sheriff, Los Angeles County Fire Chiefs' Association, Los Angeles County Police Chiefs' Association</p>	<p>On August 25 and September 2, the Board of Supervisors adopted motions designating the following municipal fire departments as Safe Surrender sites: Compton and La Verne. On September 30, the Board will consider a motion to designate the South Pasadena Fire Department as a Safe Surrender site. Both Compton and La Verne placed pre-assembled Newborn Safe Surrender kits and posted Safe Surrender signs at their fire stations. Prior to designation, all fire department staff were trained on procedures in the event of a newborn surrender. Since the County launched the Safe Surrender designation program for fire departments in August 2003, 350 municipal fire stations have been designated as Safe Surrender sites. The CAO continues to work closely with the 2nd and 4th Districts to designate all remaining municipal fire departments.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: Request First 5 LA (formerly Los Angeles County Children and Families First – Proposition 10 Commission) – in consultation with the directors of the departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS), DHS, Mental Health (DMH), Fire, the CPC, ICAN, Los Angeles Office of Education (LACOE), HASC, religious leaders, and other appropriate organizations, and in collaboration with local, regional, and State agencies – to: a) develop and support the implementation of a regionally consistent Safe Haven Public Information Campaign that conveys a prevention-oriented message about California's Safe Haven Law, and (b) identify ways to evaluate the effectiveness of that campaign.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and support the implementation of a regionally consistent Safe Haven Public Information Campaign; 2. Develop an evaluation plan to assess the effectiveness of the campaign. 	<p>Lead: First 5 LA</p> <p>Support: CAO, DCFS, DHS, DMH, Fire, CPC, ICAN, LACOE, HASC, other appropriate organizations</p>	<p>The County's SSB public information campaign included the following activities this quarter:</p> <p>(1) In July 2003, First 5 LA and DCFS, with the support of the CAO, distributed customized information packets to County health and human service departments and 5,000 community-based organizations (CBOs) that provide services to children and families Countywide. Each packet included English and Spanish language brochures, posters, wallet cards, and fact sheets, as well as a sample newsletter article and an order form for additional copies. To date, approximately 100 orders for additional materials from the public have been received and filled;</p> <p>(2) First 5 LA has worked with various members of the SSB Public Information and Marketing Workgroup, as well as the Office of Supervisor Knabe, to identify pitches to local media in support of the SSB Law. In addition, efforts continue to place SSB spokespersons on TV/radio talk shows and explore PSA development and distribution by local broadcast media. In August, a County representative conducted an interview on Channel 35 "LA Woman" to be aired in Fall 2003;</p>

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			<p>(3) The transit ad campaign, launched in June 2003, continues to run Countywide through October. The ads are running on MTA buses and shelters throughout the County; and</p> <p>(4) First 5 LA convened the SSB Public Information and Marketing Workgroup in September 2003 to discuss additional strategies to continue the public education efforts on the SSB Law.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented, although public education efforts will continue Countywide.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 4:</u> Instruct the Director of DCFS – in consultation with the directors of DHS, DMH, Fire, First Five LA, and HASC – to develop a standardized training module to be used to educate staff and the families served by their agencies about the Safe Haven Law.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop fact sheet. 2. Develop standardized training module for County and non-County organizations to use to educate staff and families served by their agencies. 	<p><u>Lead:</u> DCFS, CAO</p> <p><u>Support:</u> DHS, DMH, Fire, First Five LA, HASC, Children’s Planning Council</p>	<p>On September 5, 2003, a standardized training module was developed and issued by a workgroup comprised of County and community representatives. The training module was designed to be used for educating staff and the families served by County departments and community-based agencies about the SSB Law. The training materials, which include a trainer’s curriculum, Power Point presentation, and camera-ready handouts, provide information about the SSB Law, relinquishment and adoption, and prevention of abandoned babies. The training module has been posted on www.babysafela.org, shared with County departments (Recommendation 4) and community-based providers, and is being utilized by the Speakers’ Bureau (Recommendation 9). DCFS and ICAN are currently planning a “Train the Trainer” session in November 2003 to educate potential trainers on how to effectively train using the module.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 5: Instruct the directors of all County education, health, justice, mental health, and social service organizations, including the directors of contracted agencies, to: (a) engage appropriate staff in discussions about the Safe Haven Law as part of their annual in-service staff education programs; (b) on an ongoing basis, engage women of childbearing age and their families in discussions about the Safe Haven Law, options for assuring the well-being of their babies, and support programs available to them; and (c) request that the directors of all community- and faith-based educational, health, mental health, and social service organizations engage their staffs and the families they serve in these same educational activities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. County departments and contracted agencies must develop an internal plan to utilize the standardized training module (Recommendation 4) to educate staff about the Law in their annual in-service staff education programs. 2. County departments and contracted agencies must develop internal policies and plans to educate clients about the Safely Surrendered Baby Law. 	<p>Lead: Department of Human Resources (DHR), CAO</p> <p>Support: All education, health, justice, mental health, and social service organizations, including the directors of contracted agencies.</p>	<p>By September 30, 2003, DHR will transmit the standardized training module to all County department heads with a cover memo from Supervisor Knabe. The memo requests department heads to engage appropriate staff in training about the Law and share the information with their contracted agencies. Departments will also be invited to a training session sponsored by ICAN and DCFS in November 2003.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: Request the Superintendent of LACOE to work with the State Superintendent of Instruction, State Board of Education, and the California State PTA to develop or augment curricula on healthy sexual development for middle and high school students, including information about pregnancy prevention and teen pregnancy; the Safe Haven Law; where and how to safely surrender a baby; related support programs; the social, cultural, and psychological factors influencing women's attitudes about pregnancy and childbirth, and the unique physical and psychosocial aspects of childbearing.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop new or augmented curricula on healthy sexual development for middle and high school students that includes resources about the Safely Surrendered Baby Law and relevant support programs. 	<p>Lead: California Department of Social Services (CDSS)</p> <p>Support: LACOE</p>	<p>CDSS is currently in the process of adapting a curriculum developed by the State of New Jersey on their Safe Haven Law for use in California health and civics classes. LACOE is participating in the curriculum review process. CDSS has scheduled the curriculum for completion by December 2003 for use by local school districts Statewide.</p> <p>This recommendation will be fully implemented by CDSS in December 2003.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 7: Instruct the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to incorporate into the soon-to-be operational Countywide Web Portal an Internet-accessible link with basic information about health, mental health, and social service organizations that provide prevention and intervention services to women and families at-risk for abandoning their babies.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a Web Page to provide the public with information on the Safely Surrendered Baby Law and related resources. 2. Create an Internet-accessible link to the Countywide Web Portal with basic information to support implementation of the Safely Surrendered Baby Law. 	<p>Lead: CIO, ISD</p> <p>Support: DHS, CAO</p>	<p>The County's Web Page, www.babysafela.org, was launched in February 2003 and provides up-to-date information on all aspects of SSB Law and County implementation.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: Instruct the directors of the County departments and agencies that fund or administer hotlines/warm lines, and request other organizations that administer hotlines/warm lines, to assure that these services provide information regarding the Safe Haven Law and support services available for women and families at-risk for abandoning their infants, or who feel they are not able to keep or care for their babies.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instruct directors of departments and other organizations that administer hotlines/warm lines to include information and resources about the Safely Surrendered Baby Law in their services. 	<p>Lead: Directors of County departments and agencies that fund or administer hotlines/warm lines.</p> <p>Support: CAO</p>	<p>A database of County departments and community-based providers that fund or administer hotlines/warm lines has been compiled and included in a mailing list of organizations that received public information packets in July 2003 (see Recommendation 2).</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>
<p>Recommendation 9: Request that ICAN – with input and support from its public and private members – the CPC, faith-based organizations, and</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify participants in Speakers' Bureau. 2. Provide training 	<p>Lead: ICAN</p> <p>Support: CPC, faith-</p>	<p>The Speakers' Bureau has been developed by ICAN. A "Train the Trainer" session is being coordinated by ICAN and DCFS for November 2003 to train the Speakers' Bureau participants and others on how to use the new training module. Information on accessing a speaker from the Speakers' Bureau is available on the</p>

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<p>First 5 LA establish a Speakers' Bureau to provide speakers who can make presentations to service providers and community groups about the Safe Haven Law and support programs available for women and families at-risk for abandoning their babies.</p>	<p>materials and support to the Speakers' Bureau.</p> <p>3. Publicize availability of Speakers' Bureau for use by County departments and community groups.</p>	<p>based organizations, and First 5 LA</p>	<p>County's SSB Law Web Page.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>
<p>Recommendation 10: Instruct DHR, with support from the directors of all County departments and agencies, to inform all current and new County employees about the Safe Haven Law, its implementation in Los Angeles County, and where and how to safely surrender a baby.</p>	<p>1. Disseminate Safe Haven resources and information to all County departments and agencies.</p> <p>2. Provide information and resources about Safe Haven Law to all new County employees.</p>	<p>Lead: DHR, directors of all County departments and agencies</p>	<p>A memo from the Director of Personnel to all department heads was issued in June 2003 requesting them to ensure that all current and new employees are aware of the SSB Law and of the Board of Supervisors' commitment to implement the Safe Haven recommendations in the County of Los Angeles.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>
<p>Recommendation 11: Instruct the Director of the Internal Services Department (ISD) and County Counsel, with the support of the CAO, to explore the feasibility of ensuring that all new and renewed County contracts stipulate that each staff person in that contract organization be provided with information about the Safe Haven Law, its implementation in Los Angeles County, and where and how to safely surrender a baby, and report back to the Board with an</p>	<p>1. Develop a feasibility study for incorporating Safe Haven information into the County's contracting process.</p>	<p>Lead: ISD, County Counsel</p> <p>Support: CAO</p>	<p>On March 20, 2003, the Audit Committee approved the Board Policy Manual Statement requiring County contractors to provide information to their employees about the Safely Surrendered Baby Law and its implementation in the County. The policy went into effect on May 6, 2003.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>

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implementation plan, timeline, and cost considerations within 60 days.			
<p>Recommendation 12: Request that ICAN – with the support of the Director of DCFS and input from the DA – and directors of DHS and DMH identify a key set of data elements that will be collected regarding all newborns safely surrendered or abandoned in Los Angeles County, consistent with State instructions for data collection through the Child Welfare System/Case Management System, and report back to the Board with an implementation plan, timeline, and cost considerations for collecting these data within 60 days.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify a key set of data elements that will be collected regarding all newborns safely surrendered or abandoned in the County. 2. Develop an implementation plan, timeline, and cost considerations for collecting these data elements. 	<p>Lead: ICAN</p> <p>Support: DCFS, DHS, DMH, District Attorney</p>	<p>The notification system established last year by ICAN, DCFS, and the Coroner’s Office to track the incidence of newborn abandonments and safe surrenders continues to be operational. ICAN continues to provide ongoing updates to the Board of Supervisors, CAO, CPC, and CDSS as cases of safe surrender or infant abandonment occur.</p> <p>During the past quarter, ICAN met with representatives from involved agencies, including the CAO, DCFS, DA, County Counsel, and CDSS, as well as a representative from Supervisor Knabe’s Office, to establish consistent criteria for cases to be classified as safe surrenders by the County. The criteria will be presented to CDSS to provide clarification regarding the County’s data collection efforts and to assist in the development of consistent Statewide data collection efforts.</p> <p>Over the past quarter, ICAN has begun to analyze the data collected to date in an effort to provide more comprehensive information to support effective implementation of the SSB Law. A report on the 2002 safely surrendered and abandoned infants will be presented at ICAN’s Policy Committee on November 5, 2003.</p> <p>This recommendation has been implemented.</p>