INFANT SAFE SURRENDER

I. AUTHORITY:

California Health and Safety Code, Section 1798. California Health and Safety Code, Section 1255.7, California Penal Code 271.5.

II. APPLICATION:

This policy describes the guidelines for steps to be followed when a parent or lawful custodian (hereafter referred to as "caretaker") surrenders an infant 72-hours-old or younger under the California Safely Surrendered Baby Law at an emergency medical services (EMS) site designated by the Orange County Board of Supervisors (*e.g.*, fire station).

III. GUIDELINES:

EMS personnel will accept infants brought to them with the intent of surrendering the child. The infant should be accepted even if the age appears somewhat over 72 hours.

1. Personnel should follow their department policy to address the internal steps to be followed when a caretaker surrenders the child.

2. A "Safe Surrender Kit" shall be opened and a numbered / coded identification bracelet shall be placed on the infant's ankles. A copy of the coded ankle bracelet will be given to the caretaker surrendering the infant.

3. EMS personnel will perform a rapid assessment of the infant to identify any immediate treatment needs. Document the infant's assessment on a Prehospital Care Report. If it appears that the infant has been the victim of child abuse or neglect, request law enforcement.

4. EMS personnel shall offer care to the mother if she is the caretaker surrendering the infant. Document the mother's assessment on a separate Prehospital Care Report.

5. The caretaker should be encouraged to complete the "Newborn Family Medical Questionnaire." If necessary, assist the caretaker with completing the document. Offer to give the caretaker a copy to return via U.S. mail only if they will not complete the Questionnaire immediately.

6. Transport the infant to the nearest Paramedic Receiving Center with OB services. EMS personnel should notify the hospital of their impending arrival. If the child appears to be ill or need medical attention, establish base contact.

7. Confirm with hospital staff who will make notification to Orange County Social Services.

Note: Until Safe Surrender Kits are available county-wide, EMS providers should adhere to internal departmental policies on this matter.

Italicized Text Identifies Quotations from an Authority Outside Orange County EMS.