



General Assembly

January Session, 2025

Raised Bill No. 1310

LCO No. 4626



Referred to Committee on COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

Introduced by:
(KID)

AN ACT AUTHORIZING HOSPITALS TO INSTALL DEVICES ON AN EXTERIOR WALL OF AN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT TO FACILITATE THE VOLUNTARY SURRENDER OF INFANTS TO EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT STAFF.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 17a-58 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

3 (a) An employee designated pursuant to section 17a-57, as amended
4 by this act, shall take physical custody of any infant thirty days or
5 younger if the parent or lawful agent of the parent voluntarily
6 surrenders physical custody of the infant to such designated employee
7 unless the parent or agent clearly expresses an intent to return for the
8 infant.

9 (b) (1) If the mother of an infant wishes to voluntarily surrender
10 physical custody of the infant while the mother is in the hospital to give
11 birth to the infant, the mother shall provide notice that she wishes to
12 surrender physical custody of the infant to any health care provider who
13 is licensed by the Department of Public Health and who provides health

14 care services on behalf of the hospital. Upon receipt of such notice, such
15 health care provider shall notify the designated employee pursuant to
16 section 17a-57, as amended by this act, who shall immediately take
17 physical custody of the infant. No hospital employee or health care
18 provider shall disclose the name of the mother to the Department of
19 Children and Families or any person or organization without the
20 mother's permission.

21 (2) If the parent of an infant wishes to voluntarily surrender physical
22 custody of the infant after the infant has been born and is no longer in
23 the hospital, the parent may surrender the infant by placing the infant
24 in a safe haven bassinet, as described in section 17a-57, as amended by
25 this act, if available. Upon surrender of the infant pursuant to this
26 subdivision, the designated employee shall immediately take physical
27 custody of the infant.

28 (c) The designated employee may request the parent or agent, other
29 than a parent described in subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this
30 section, to provide (1) the name of the parent or agent, (2) information
31 on the medical history of the infant and parents, and (3) the infant's
32 name and date of birth if the infant's birth has been registered in the
33 state vital records system prior to the surrender of the infant.
34 Notwithstanding such a request from the designated employee, the
35 parent or agent is not required to provide such name or information.
36 The designated employee may provide the parent or agent with a
37 numbered identification bracelet to link the parent or agent to the infant.
38 The bracelet shall be used for identification only and shall not be
39 construed to authorize the person who possesses the bracelet to take
40 custody of the infant on demand. The designated employee shall
41 provide the parent or agent with a pamphlet describing the process
42 established under sections 17a-57 to 17a-60, inclusive, as amended by
43 this act, and sections 17a-61, 53-21 and 53-23.

44 Sec. 2. Section 17a-57 of the general statutes is repealed and the
45 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

46 (a) Each hospital operating an emergency room shall designate all
 47 members of the emergency room nursing staff as employees authorized
 48 to take physical custody of an infant pursuant to section 17a-58, as
 49 amended by this act. There shall be a designated employee on duty at
 50 each hospital emergency room during regular business hours. There
 51 shall be a designated place inside such hospital emergency room where
 52 physical custody may be taken.

53 (b) Any hospital operating an emergency room may install a safe
 54 haven bassinet on an exterior wall of the emergency department for the
 55 purpose of receiving infants who are voluntarily surrendered pursuant
 56 to section 17a-58, as amended by this act. Any such safe haven bassinet
 57 shall be climate controlled and include (1) an exterior door that
 58 automatically locks upon the placement of an infant in the bassinet
 59 when the door is closed, and (2) a notification alarm that alerts
 60 emergency room nursing staff that an infant has been placed in the
 61 bassinet.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2025	17a-58
Sec. 2	October 1, 2025	17a-57

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Sec. 2	October 1, 2025	17a-57

Statement of Purpose:

To prevent infant abandonment and provide a safe and legal option for parents in crisis to voluntarily surrender an infant to emergency department staff.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]