

NEWS RELEASE

Communications & Legislative Services ■ Phone: 402-471-9108 ■ Fax: 402-471-3996 ■ www.dhhs.ne.gov

[Newsroom](#) > DHHS News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 21, 2009

CONTACT

Jeanne Atkinson, Communications and Legislative Services, (402) 471-8287

Nebraska Has First Safe Haven Case Under New Law

Lincoln – The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has confirmed that a male Caucasian newborn less than 30 days of age was dropped off by a relative at the Box Butte General Hospital in Alliance on the evening of July 20.

“This is the first time the safe haven option has been used since passage of LB 1 during a Special Session of the Legislature last November,” said Kerry Winterer, CEO of DHHS. “Our Alliance office child welfare staff will be focusing on the safety and well-being of this child and making placement in a currently licensed foster home. DHHS staff will assist as law enforcement and the Box Butte County Attorney attempt to gather more information on this little boy.”

Based on LB 1, the Box Butte County Attorney does not plan to file abuse or neglect charges.

“It’s important to gather information like family medical history to meet this child’s current and future needs,” said Winterer. “If anyone has any information about the identity of this little boy, we would ask them to contact our DHHS Western Service Area Administrative Office in Gering at (308) 436-6559, the Box Butte County Sheriff’s office at (308) 762-6464, the Alliance Police Department at (308) 762-4955, or the Nebraska State Patrol at (308) 632-1211.”

-30-

Note: The full text of LB 1 (2008) says:

“No person shall be prosecuted for any crime based solely upon the act of leaving a child thirty days or younger in the custody of an employee on duty at a hospital licensed by the State of Nebraska. The hospital shall promptly contact appropriate authorities to take custody of the child.”