

Murder and Abandonment Charges Filed in Infant Death

Local News

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OCEAN SHORES, Wash. (AP) -- Prosecutors have charged a 21-year-old man with second-degree murder, saying his newborn daughter was still alive when he took her into a wooded area near Ocean Shores, Wash. KOMO-TV says (<http://is.gd/La3z3T>) Patrick Parnel was charged Wednesday. Court documents say Parnel and his girlfriend, 21-year-old Brittany Taylor, didn't want anyone to know the young woman was about to deliver, so they went to an Ocean Shores motel, where the baby was born April 3. The infant's body was found two days later by a woman out walking her dog. Prosecutors say Parnel initially told detectives he dropped the baby in the toilet and cut the back of her head with scissors. In charging documents, prosecutors say Parnel later acknowledged that the baby began crying when he took her into the woods so he went to his car and got an object to use to beat her. The coroner says the baby died of blunt force trauma to the head. Taylor has been charged with abandonment of a dependent person. It was not immediately known if the two were represented by lawyers. Washington State's Safety of Newborn Children Law Within 72 hours of an infant's birth, you can leave an infant at any hospital without fear of prosecution. An infant is most vulnerable within the first few hours of life, so it is critical that the infant receives any needed medical care.

Safety of Newborn Children Law Following are highlights of the requirements under the Safety of Newborn Children Law: 72 hours Within 72 hours of an infant's birth, you can leave an infant at any hospital without fear of prosecution. An infant is most vulnerable within the first few hours of life, so it is critical that the infant receives any needed medical care. Designated Drop-Off Locations You must leave your baby with a **qualified person** at one of the following 3 locations to avoid prosecution: **The emergency department of a hospital in Washington State.** This is the safest drop-off location. **A fire station during its hours of operation.** The law states that you may drop off your infant at a fire station, however, this is not the safest drop-off location. Some fire stations may not be staffed, or may be empty for extended periods of time while crews respond to emergencies. Under the Safety of Newborn Children Law, you **must** leave your infant with a qualified person. **Federally designated rural health clinic during its hours of operation.** Qualified Person A parent of a newborn who leaves their newborn with a qualified person at a designated drop-off location is not subject to criminal liability. A qualified person means any person that you reasonably believe is: An employee, volunteer, or medical staff member of a hospital or federally designated rural health clinic during its hours of operation. A fire fighter, volunteer, or emergency medical technician at a [fire station](#). Unharmed As long as the newborn is brought in unharmed from abuse or neglect, the guarantee of anonymity and immunity from prosecution applies. Official Legislative Laws [Revised Code of Washington 9A.42.060-080 \(RCW 9A.42.060-080\)](#) - Abandonment of a Dependent Person. [Revised Code of Washington 13.34.360 \(RCW 13.34.360\)](#) - Transfer of newborn to qualified person/ Criminal liability/Notification to child protective services/Definitions. [Revised Code of Washington 26.20.030-035 \(RCW 26.20.030-035\)](#) - Family Abandonment/Family Support.