

# Birth Doula Services Agreement

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## What is a doula?

As a doula I provide suggestions for physical comfort, and emotional support during labor and birth. I have been trained and certified as a doula through DONA International and am certified as a childbirth educator through Lamaze.

## When you are in labor...

Please call me when you *think* you are in labor, even if you do not need me. We will decide together if I should come soon, or wait for further change. If we have determined that it's the time for inperson support, I need approximately 2 hours to get to you from the time you ask me to come. I can often come sooner. We will also decide where to meet – at your home, the hospital or birth center. Except for extraordinary circumstances, I or my back-up will remain with you throughout labor and birth. Normally a doula joins you in active labor. Occasionally we may connect in early labor, and then reconnect when labor is more established. This is often the case with an induction.

Should you elect to have a cesarean prior to or during labor, you agree that your doula will continue to provide services to prepare for the birth, and be present prior to and after the surgery. This may be done virtually. If you would like, and your doctor will allow, I will be with you in the OR as well.

We agree, if possible, to call rather than text to let the doula know you are in labor and to allow the doula to speak directly with the laboring person as well as her husband/partner.

## After birth...

I usually remain with you for one or two hours after birth, until you feel comfortable and your family is ready for quiet time together. (If hospital policy allows) I can also help with initial breastfeeding, if necessary. Please know that a baby's first nursing experience is often one of familiarization and stimulation and not always what is depicted with older babies.

I am available by phone, text and email to answer questions about your birth. I would like to get together on-line or in-person within 2 weeks of the birth to see how you and baby are doing, to review the birth, share photos, answer breastfeeding questions, make referral suggestions (if appropriate) and to get feedback from you about my role.

### **What I do not do...**

As a doula I do not perform clinical tasks, such as fetal heart rate checks, vaginal exams and others. For an unusually fast labor, we would call 911. I am there to guide physical comfort, provide emotional support and help you get information. I do not make decisions for you. I will help you to get information necessary to make an informed decision. I will also remind you if there is a departure from your birth plan. Additionally, I will not speak to the staff instead of allowing you to do so regarding matters where decisions need to be made. I will discuss your concerns with you and suggest options. You, or your partner will speak on your behalf to the clinical staff whenever possible.

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### **Fees...**

The doula fee is \$2400.

A \$500 non-refundable retainer is due when I am hired. The remaining \$1900 is due at 38 weeks of pregnancy. The preferred payment method is that the first check is dated when I am hired, and the second is dated for 38 weeks. The second check is

deposited after the birth of your baby. Because I do not want to risk you limiting the amount of support you receive, unlike other doulas, I do not charge an hourly rate after 18 hours. At your discretion, please consider providing additional compensation for longer labors. This will not be brought up by the doula.

If I fail to attend the birth or fail to send a back-up doula, *despite you requesting the doula join you via a phone conversation*, I will return your entire fee minus the \$500 retainer.

### **Obligations...**

At your discretion, via phone, email or text, please contact me after prenatal or other medical visits so that I am up-to-date regarding your care. I will make every effort to provide the services described here. Sometimes, this is impossible (for example, with a rapid labor). Although I do not join you at the first signs of labor, you agree that you will contact me when you *think* labor *may* be beginning. By signing this contract you understand that in retaining my services, I may have declined other clients and have made every effort to be on-call for you for one month. You agree that if, for any reason (including natural disasters), you fail to keep a prenatal or postpartum appointment or to speak to me when you are in labor to request the doula join you, the full fee is non-refundable. My on-call time for you begins 2 weeks before, and continues 2 weeks after your due date. Should you give birth before or after that, it is my desire to be with you and I will make every effort to provide support services. You agree to use these doula services even if labor begins before your due month, if I am available to provide the service. I do work with back-up doulas and should I not be available during labor, or during unusually long labors, I will contact my back-up to attend. In accordance with HIPAA confidentiality regulations, this document also serves as a release form allowing your doula to take notes about you, including personal information you choose to disclose, information

regarding your labor, birth and postpartum, as well as any information regarding your child/ren.

**COVID Safety Measures...**

Within an hour of meeting, I agree to each do a temperature check and accurately report the temperature. I agree to wear a masks if requested and to maintain social distance if requested. However, I, the doula will not ask it of you or your partner if you do not wish to wear one or remain distant. We agree to release all financial and legal liability from either party and their heirs should any of us become positive for COVID before, during or after the birth.

COVID Safety Measures

We agree to all stipulations in this agreement.

Mother &  
Partner \_\_\_\_\_

EDD \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Doula \_\_\_\_\_

Checks: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_