

## **Birth Doula Services Agreement**

“A **doula** (pronounced "doó la", also known as a labor coach and originating from the [Ancient Greek](#) word δούλη meaning female servant or slave) is a non-medical person who assists a woman before, during, or after [childbirth](#), as well as her partner and/or family by providing information, physical assistance, and emotional support. The provision of continuous support during labor by doulas is associated with improved maternal and fetal health and a variety of other benefits.”  
-<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doula>

A doula can be an amazing addition to your labor and delivery preparations, whether the birth is at home, in the birth center or especially at a hospital. We work with Midwives and Doctors, and Nurses, help maintain and deliver the highest possible evidence based care available.

### **What a doula does:**

- Present clients evidence-based research to educate about the large scope of normal birth, available options, choices, and alternatives for the healthiest and safest birth
- Helps a new family to find their voice and confidence in order to advocate and make decisions for their own birth experience and plan
- Provides emotional and physical support with relaxation techniques
- Supports and guides the partner to being THE birth partner, unless otherwise agreed upon in advance.
- Creates a continuum of care and comfort from pregnancy, through labor and postpartum

### **What a doula doesn't do:**

- ANY medical care or replace a birth partner
- Physical exams or make assessments of maternal/infant well being
- Speak to the primary care providers for parents
- Make decisions

### **Before the baby comes**

**Free consultation/interview.** It is very important that you and your partner are comfortable with the group and with our role in the birth. Thus, we do expect to meet/video conference with clients and their partners at least once before contracting to become acquainted, to explore and discuss your priorities and any fears or concerns, and to plan how we might best work together. This initial meeting is free and does not obligate you to use our services.

**Group prenatal meetups.** You must arrange to attend at least 2 prenatal meetups\* (1 hour each) before labor begins, but you can attend as many group prenatal meetups\* as you want, preferably both before 37 weeks in your pregnancy. One private meeting\* will be arranged with all the doulas to help finalize your birth plan around 36 weeks. These meetings give you a chance to meet all the partner doulas, to learn about many aspects of birth and postpartum, and to meet other families to build your birth community. Our role is to help you have a positive birth experience, as you define it, with continuous doula support \*May be virtually held during Covid

**On Call Period.** This is from 37-42 weeks gestation. We are available by phone, text or email to you at all times during this period. At your private meeting we will create a group text to use to notify us of labor symptoms, update after provider appts or random questions you have. During this time a doula will not be more than one hour from home, and available to join you with **TWO hours** notice.

**Fees.** The total fee for birth doula services is \$1200. We ask for a deposit of half the fee, or sign up for a 4 month payment plan, as soon as you have chosen us as your doulas. This secures your due time on our calendar. The remainder of the fee is due at 37-38 weeks. You may pay in cash or checks, PayPal or Venmo from our website. Other payment plans can be arranged if necessary. Insurance reimbursement may be available if you have RI insurance, please check with your provider. At this time we are not billing insurance, but will provide a super bill for you to get reimbursed.

### **Once Labor Begins**

**Establish contact.** We prefer that you call or text when you think you are in labor, even if you do not yet need us or it's a false alarm, so we can make life arrangements. We will answer questions and make suggestions over the phone or by text.

Lauren 804-337-8143

Rachelle 773-218-1661

Hailey 401-744-4973

**Joining you.** We will decide when we should come based on you and your partner's coping ability, but we usually need approximately 2 hours notice to get to you from the time you ask us to come, so plan ahead. We will also decide where to meet—at your home, or the hospital or birthing center. We want to be extremely helpful to you when you need it most, so in general we hope to join you at the hospital, so we have plenty of energy to get you through the entire labor, but if you're feeling anxious or having a long labor often we visit your home. It is YOUR responsibility to get a doula to your birth by giving us plenty of notice that things are progressing, but if labor is fast and furious call us so we can try to get there quickly.

### **After baby arrives**

**Immediate Postpartum.** We usually remain with you for about 2-3 hours after birth, until you are comfortable and the family is ready for quiet time together. We can also help with initial breastfeeding, if necessary. We are available by phone or text to answer questions about the birth of your baby or about newborn baby care.

**Postpartum Visit\*.** Our services include 1 postpartum home visit\* with whichever doula or doulas attended your birth – usually in the month after the birth, but whenever you're ready. During this visit, we can provide breastfeeding support, baby care tips, referrals to community resources, and we will discuss your birth story

**We will make every effort to provide the services described here. Sometimes this is impossible for unforeseen reasons, like super quick births, changes in hospital policy allowing doulas or unplanned emergency deliveries.**

**We WILL NOT be able to attend if you test positive for Covid less than 10 days prior to your birth, unless you can get a negative test toward the end of that time. We will provide virtual support in this case.**

**It is your responsibility to get us to your birth with enough notice for us to arrange our affairs, typically we need a minimum 2 hours notice. If you do not receive a reply in 10 minutes, call one of us.**

**If we miss your birth due to circumstances beyond anyone's control (for example, extremely rapid labor or not allowed in a Cesarean or Covid situation) the full payment will not be**

**refunded but we will attend virtually if you set up the tech in the hospital space or arrange additional postpartum services or postpartum photographs in exchange for birth fees.**

**If you fail to call us to attend your labor or decide for any reason not to use our services last minute, there is NO refund.**

**Deposit received: Date, and amount:\_\_\_\_\_**

**I / we have read this letter describing the doula services and agree that it reflects the discussion we have had with them.**

\_\_\_\_\_

(Client Printed Name and Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Partner Printed Name and Signature)

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