

## **Contract of Services for Doula Support**

As a birth doula, I provide emotional and physical support to a woman during her labor and delivery. I can also facilitate communication with the staff to ensure that you have the information you need to make informed decisions regarding your baby's birth. I can provide reassurance and perspective to you and your partner, make suggestions for labor progress, and help with relaxation, massage, positioning and other techniques for your comfort. I am independent and self-employed, and as such, am working for YOU, not your caregiver or place of birth.

### **BEFORE LABOR**

I will meet with you and your partner at least once (preferably twice) before labor to become acquainted with you; explore and discuss your priorities and any fears or concerns; present evidence-based information on the risks and benefits of common interventions and procedures used during childbirth; discuss your birth plans; and plan how we might best work together.

I will also inform you of times when I am unavailable for labor support. To cover those times, I will arrange one or more qualified back-up doulas whom you may also meet.

We may also decide on other meetings, and will remain in touch by telephone and/or e-mail communication.

### **DURING LABOR**

I prefer that you call me when you think you are in labor, even if you do not yet need me. This gives me time to clear my calendar for the next 24 hours and arrange for childcare. I can answer questions and make suggestions over the phone, and we can decide if I should come to you then, or wait for further change. I usually need approximately one hour to get to you from the time you ask me to come. We will also decide where to meet (home or hospital). Except for extraordinary circumstances, I will remain with you throughout your labor and birth.

### **AFTER THE BIRTH**

I usually remain with you for one or two hours after the birth, until you are comfortable and your family is ready for quiet time together. I can also help with initial breastfeeding.

I am available to answer questions about the birth or your baby, and I will schedule a follow-up meeting within a few weeks of the birth to visit you and the baby, review the birth, and get feedback from you about my role.

### **LIMITATION OF SERVICES**

As a doula, I do not:

1. Perform clinical tasks, such as taking blood pressure, fetal heart checks or vaginal exams. I am there to provide only physical comfort and emotional support and facilitate communication between you and the staff.
2. Make decisions for you. I will help you get the information you need to make an informed decision. I will also remind you if there is a departure from your birth plan.
3. Speak to the staff on your behalf. I will discuss your concerns with you and suggest options, as well as encourage you to voice your opinions, questions and concerns to the staff.

### **EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES**

As a doula, I can help you prepare for your birth, but I cannot guarantee that your birth will go as planned.

If you plan a vaginal delivery and a cesarean is performed after the onset of labor, I will continue to provide support during the cesarean surgery (as allowed by hospital and/or doctor policies) as well as immediately after to help with your comfort and breastfeeding. I will also follow-up with you after the birth, as I do with all my clients. In this scenario, my full fee applies, and no refund will be given.

If you and your doctor decide that a planned cesarean is necessary (that is, a cesarean done before your due date and/or before the onset of labor), I will provide support during the cesarean (as allowed by hospital and/or doctor policies) and immediately after, as well as one additional 3-hour postpartum visit to assist with breastfeeding, cleaning, laundry, baby care, etc. for my usual fee.

**FAILURE TO PROVIDE SERVICES**

I will make every effort to provide the services described here. If my failure to attend your birth is due to my error, there will be no charge for my services and I will refund the fee, minus the retainer.

If my failure to attend your birth is due to an error on your part (failing to call me, for example) no refund will be given, and I will keep my full fee.

If my failure to attend your birth is due to a rapid labor (baby is born less than one hour after you call me and ask me to come), I will provide an additional 3 hours of postpartum support at no cost once you are discharged from the hospital. This can include assistance with breastfeeding, laundry, cleaning, baby care, etc. My full fee applies.

Any other circumstances out of my control that result in my absence at your birth will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, and may or may not result in a partial or full refund.

**FEES**

For the services described here, to be paid as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_ as a retainer fee, due when you select me as your doula and sign this contract.

\_\_\_\_\_ due by the end of your 37<sup>th</sup> week (two weeks before your due date).

I/We have read this contract describing the doula’s services and agree to enter into a client-doula relationship for the pregnancy and birth with a due date of \_\_\_\_\_.

Client Name \_\_\_\_\_ Client Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Client Name \_\_\_\_\_ Client Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Doula Name \_\_\_\_\_ Doula Signature\_\_\_\_\_