

Letter of Agreement Describing Doula (Labor Support) Services, Limits and Fees

As a doula, I will draw on my knowledge and experience to provide emotional support, physical comfort and, as needed, communication with the staff to make sure that you have the information you need to make informed decisions as they arise in labor. I can provide reassurance and perspective to you and your husband, make suggestions for labor progress, and help with relaxation, massage, positioning and other techniques for comfort. I am independent and self-employed. As your doula, I am working for you, not your caregiver or hospital.

As a doula, I do not perform clinical tasks, such as blood pressure, fetal heart checks, or vaginal exams. I am there to provide physical comfort, emotional support and advocacy. As I do not make decisions for you, I will help you get the information necessary to make an informed decision. I will also remind you if there is a departure from your Birth Plan. I will speak to you instead of the staff regarding matters where decisions are being made. I will discuss your concerns with you and suggest options and allow you or your husband to speak on your behalf to the clinical staff.

I prefer to meet with you and your husband at least once before labor to become acquainted, to explore and discuss your priorities and any fears or concerns, and to plan how we might best work together. I would like to become familiar with your Birth Plan, including your preferences regarding management options and the use of pain medications. I also want to know your own best ways of coping with pain and fatigue and how you and your husband foresee working together. We may also decide on other meetings and will certainly want to remain in touch by telephone.

I will also inform you of times when I am unavailable for labor support. To cover those times, I will arrange one or more back-up doulas whom you may also meet. Of course, you have as much choice over your back up as your primary doula.

I prefer that you call me when you think you are in labor, even if you do not yet need me. I can answer questions and make suggestions over the phone. We will decide if I should come right then or wait for further change. We will also decide where to meet - at your home or the hospital. Except for extraordinary circumstances, my back up or I will remain with you throughout labor and birth.

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

