



## *Southeast Michigan Doula Project*

### *Client Agreement*

\*This contract is for use by SMDP volunteer doulas.

Dear SMDP expecting mom, please read this agreement carefully and sign and date at the bottom. You may want to keep a copy for your records. If you do not have access to a copy machine, please let us know and we will provide you with a copy. If you have questions, or difficulty reading or understanding this agreement, your doula can help.

#### **What Your Doula Does**

All SMDP volunteer doulas are trained by a certifying organization (DONA, CAPP, ALACE) and are fully qualified to provide nonjudgmental, comprehensive, compassionate, and evidence-based doula care. Our doulas are not required to be certified, which is aligned with doula practice as a whole and the high number of doulas who choose not to certify for various acceptable reasons. All SMDP policies and services provided are consistent with the DONA International Standards of Practice, sections I and II, which can be found at the end of this agreement.

Your doula will provide at least 1 prenatal and 1 postpartum visit, as well as full attendance at your birth. She will be “on-call” two weeks before your estimated due date, and remain so until your birth.

The specifics surrounding your meetings, including time, place, and content, will be determined by you and your doula based on your individual needs. Your doula provides the same service to you as they would to a private client, regardless of what you are able to pay. She is both the face of our agency, as well as the face of her own practice, and providing exceptional care is the key to her professional success.

If you do not feel that your doula is a good match, please contact an SMDP coordinator to discuss your concerns and/or request a new match. Your comfort is our priority and we want you to enjoy your experience with us.

As does any doula, your doula has personal obligations. We ask that you discuss the best ways to keep in touch and respect your doula’s “business hours.” Should an emergency arise and your doula is unable to attend your birth, she will inform you as well as SMDP and a backup doula will be provided to you.

As per SMDP policy, except under extreme circumstances, your doula is not able to provide transportation at any point during your working relationship. Should one of these circumstances arise, you will be asked to sign a waiver.

If you are unable to pay any portion of your fee by this time, please inform one of our coordinators so that we can arrange a payment plan or adjust your fee. Inability to pay will not exclude you from services.

The Southeast Michigan Doula Project is a 501(c)3 non profit agency. All doulas work on a voluntary basis and all fees are used for program costs in order to ensure that we can continue to provide high quality care through a diverse base of volunteers. Our volunteers understand that they are unable to accept direct payment from clients.

Payment can be made by paypal at southeastmidoulas@gmail.com, or checks/money orders can be made payable to Southeast Michigan Doula Project. Unfortunately, we cannot accept cash. If you are paying by check, your doula can deliver it to SMDP or you can mail it to Southeast Michigan Doula Project, P.O. Box 8371, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48107.

### **Refunds**

Should your doula fail to attend your birth without taking the appropriate steps to arrange a backup doula, you will continue to receive postpartum care. You may choose to use a new doula for this part of your care. Please understand that the chances of a doula missing a birth are extremely low.

Please note, if your doula does not attend your birth through no fault of her own, e.g. you have a rapid labor, or do not call her to tell her you are in labor, she will not be held responsible.

Please contact the Southeast Michigan Doula Project at (734) 531-8695 or southeastmidoulas@gmail.com with any questions or concerns.

### **Acceptance of Terms**

I have read the Client Agreement and agree to its terms and conditions.

Your donation amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_ due by: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Birth Doula Standards of Practice

Based on those set forth by DONA International [www.DONA.org](http://www.DONA.org)

### I) Scope

A) Services Rendered. The doula accompanies the woman in labor, provides emotional and physical support, suggests comfort measures, and provides support and suggestions for the partner. Whenever possible, the doula provides pre- and postpartum emotional support, including explanation and discussion of practices and procedures, and assistance in acquiring the knowledge necessary to make informed decisions about her care. Additionally, as doulas do not “prescribe” treatment, any suggestions or information provided within the role of the doula must be done with the provision that the doula advises her client to check with her primary care provider before using any application.

B) Limits to Practice. DONA International Standards and Certification apply to emotional and physical support only. The DONA certified doula does not perform clinical or medical tasks such as taking blood pressure or temperature, fetal heart tone checks, vaginal examinations, or postpartum clinical care. If doulas who are also health care professionals choose to provide services for a client that are outside the doula’s scope of practice, they should not describe themselves as doulas to their client or to others. In such cases they should describe themselves by a name other than “doula” and provide services according to the scopes of practice and the standards of their health care profession. On the other hand, if a health care professional chooses to limit her services to those provided by doulas, it is acceptable according to DONA International’s Standards for her to describe herself as a doula.

C) Advocacy. The doula advocates for the client’s wishes as expressed in her birth plan, in prenatal conversations, and intrapartum discussion, by encouraging her client to ask questions of her care provider and to express her preferences and concerns. The doula helps the mother incorporate changes in plans if and when the need arises, and enhances the communication between client and care provider. Clients and doulas must recognize that the advocacy role does not include the doula speaking instead of the client or making decisions for the client. The advocacy role is best described as support, information, and mediation or negotiation.

D) Referrals. For client needs beyond the scope of the doula’s training, referrals are made to appropriate resources.

### II) Continuity of Care

A) The doula should make back-up arrangements with another doula to ensure services to the client if the doula is unable to attend the birth.