



Work-Study Commitment

BirthWell Partners Work-Study is set up as a win-win for doulas and clients: You will receive comprehensive training, mentoring, and matching with doula clients to obtain the hands-on experience that will prepare you for community doula work and meet DONA certification requirements for birth doulas. At the same time, the BirthWell clients you serve will receive one-on-one support that has the potential to improve both maternal and infant health outcomes.

In full transparency, what we are asking of you requires a commitment of time and energy on your part and on ours for the next 12 months. Please read through this document thoroughly and ask any questions before agreeing to the commitment. If you feel that now is not the right time for you to take on this commitment, please let us know. It may be possible for you to join a future training instead. It is also possible to pay for training on a payment plan and not be committed to attending any births after training. If you are at all unsure about this commitment, please discuss your concerns with BirthWell staff.

BirthWell Partners Agrees to Provide:

- A comprehensive *Birth Doula Workshop* that fulfills the Introduction to Childbirth + Birth Doula Training Workshop requirements for doula certification through DONA International
- Reimbursement for attendance of *Breastfeeding Basics for Doulas* online webinar through DONA International (\$65 fee is paid by trainee and reimbursed after trainee submits certificate of attendance)
- *A Perinatal Health Advocate Training*
- *An Orientation* to working with BirthWell Clients
- Meetings and continuing education to assist you with meeting certification requirements through DONA International
- Mentoring and support from experienced doulas
- Reimbursement for a one-year DONA membership and certification application fees when work-study recipient has attended client births and submitted all required paperwork in a timely manner.

Work Study Participant Agrees to:

- Pay a \$75, non-refundable administration fee. This fee signals your commitment to follow through with the program and covers associated costs including your background check
- Attend the *Introduction to Childbirth Education for Doulas* course
- Attend the *Doula Training Workshop*
- Attend the *Breastfeeding Basics for Doulas* online webinar through DONA International within 2 weeks of attending the Birth Doula Workshop (Note: this training costs \$65 and will be reimbursed after you present proof of completion)



- Attend the *Perinatal Health Advocate Training*
- Attend the *Doula Orientation*
- Follow the *DONA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Birth Doulas* (Attachment A)
- Check and respond to messages (email, phone, or text) within a 24-hour period of time, and stay in regular communication with program staff.
- Update staff regarding contact with doula clients and promptly notify staff if client loses contact or a situation arises in which doula is unable to fulfill a commitment to a client.
- Provide birth doula services to the required number of BirthWell Partners' clients (3 for full work-study/2 for partial work-study) within 12 months of attending the classroom training. Services include 2 prenatal visits, birth support, and 2 postpartum visits.
- Abide by the *BirthWell Partners Primary Labor Support and Backup Protocol for Volunteer/Work-Study Doulas* (Attachment B)
- Arrange backup with another doula in the program for each client doula is assigned
- Provide backup to other doulas in the program (Note: if you attend a birth as a back-up, it will count toward your required births)
- Complete and submit documentation for each client in a timely manner as outlined in procedures. In order to count a birth as "attended," we must receive all required documentation (prenatal visit forms, birth data, postpartum visit forms). If a doula provides services but does not provide documentation, BirthWell will not count the birth toward the work-study commitment.
- Represent BirthWell Partners in a professional manner at all times

Cost Summary:

A full work-study award covers 100% of the tuition for a DONA-approved Birth Doula Training, as well as certification fees (value of \$1125). BirthWell will additionally provide free mentoring and continuing education opportunities. The full work-study awardee's contribution will be a \$75 administration fee (non-refundable), and documented provision of prenatal, labor, and postpartum support to 3 BirthWell clients.

A partial work-study award covers approximately 80% of the tuition for a DONA-approved Birth Doula Training, as well as certification fees (value of \$1125). BirthWell will additionally provide free mentoring and continuing education opportunities. The partial work-study awardee's contribution will be \$275, which includes the administration fee, and documented provision of prenatal, labor, and postpartum support to 2 BirthWell clients.

Please note also that all trainees register and pay \$65 for their "Breastfeeding Basics for Doulas" online class through DONA International. However, this fee will be reimbursed in full after trainee has submitted proof of attendance.



Note: You are not prohibited from taking private clients while fulfilling your work-study commitment. In fact, we encourage you to establish a private doula practice as soon as you feel you are ready.

I, **[name]** have read this commitment document and accept the conditions outlined herein for a **[full or partial]** work-study position.

signature

date



I. Rules of Conduct

- A. *Propriety.* The doula should maintain high standards of personal conduct in the capacity or identity as a birth doula.
- B. *Competence and Professional Development.* The doula should strive to become and remain proficient in the professional practice and the performance of professional functions through continuing education, affiliation with related organizations, and associations with other birth doulas.
- C. *Honor our Statement of Values on Social Media.* On social media platforms, the doula should extend respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith towards doulas and on behalf of the doula profession. The influence on students, consumers and fellow doulas extends beyond time in a birth, postpartum session or workshop setting. When engaging on social media platforms, the doula agrees to clarify that any opinions are his/her own, show respect in each communication, use good judgment in sharing only public information, and be aware that social media content is permanent and may reflect on DONA International and follow the Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, and the Code of Conduct (trainers only).
- D. *Integrity.* The doula should act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity.

II. Ethical Responsibility to Clients

- A. *Primacy of Client's Interests.* The doula's primary responsibility is to his/her clients.
- B. *Rights and Prerogatives of Clients.* The doula should make every effort to foster maximum self-determination on the part of his/her clients.
- C. *Confidentiality and Privacy.* The doula should respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional service.
- D. *Obligation to Serve.* The doula should assist each client seeking birth doula support either by providing services or making appropriate referrals.
- E. *Reliability.* When the doula agrees to work with a particular client, his/her obligation is to do so reliably, without fail, for the term of the agreement.
- F. *Fees.* When setting fees, the doula should ensure that they are fair, reasonable and commensurate with services performed. The doula must clearly state his/her fees to the client and describe the services provided, terms of payment and refund policies.

III. Ethical Responsibility to Colleagues

- A. *Respect, Fairness, and Courtesy.* The doula should treat colleagues with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith. DONA International does not tolerate discrimination (including age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, disability, or marital status or any other legally recognized protected group) and will uphold federal, state, and local laws, regulations or ordinances.
- B. *Dealing with Colleagues' Clients.* The doula has the responsibility to relate to the clients of colleagues with full professional consideration.

IV. Ethical Responsibility to the Birth Doula Profession

- A. *Maintaining the Integrity of the Profession.* The doula should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge and mission of the profession.

B. *Community Service.* The doula is encouraged to promote the DONA International vision of “A doula for every person who wants one,” by providing birth doula services at a reduced cost, if possible, or making appropriate referrals, as available.

V. Ethical Responsibility to Society

A. *Promoting Maternal and Child Welfare.* The doula should promote the general health of women and their babies, and whenever possible, that of their family and friends as well.

By signing this document, I agree to abide by DONA International’s Code of Ethics.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

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 post-partum emotional support, including explanation and discussion of practices and procedures, and assistance in acquiring the knowledge necessary for the client to make informed decisions about their own care. Additionally, as doulas do not “prescribe” treatment, any suggestions or information provided within the role of the doula must be done with the proviso that the doula advises his/her client to check with the primary care provider before using any application.
- B. ***Limits to Practice.*** DONA International Standards and Certification apply to emotional, physical and informational support only. The DONA certified or member 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. The DONA certified or member doula will not diagnose or treat in any modality.
- If the doula has qualifications in alternative or complementary modalities (such as aromatherapy, childbirth education, massage therapy, placenta encapsulation, etc.), s/he must make it very clear to her/his clients and others that those modalities are an additional service, outside of the doula’s scope of practice.
 - A healthcare provider (such as a nurse, midwife, chiropractor, etc.) may not refer to her/himself as a doula while providing services outside of a doula’s scope of practice.
 - On the other hand, if a health care, alternative care or complementary care professional chooses to limit her/his services to those provided by doulas, it is acceptable according to DONA International’s Standards of Practice for her/him to describe her/himself 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 his/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. Should any doula feel a need to discontinue service to an established client, it is the doula’s responsibility to notify the client in writing and arrange for a replacement, if the client so desires. This may be accomplished by:
- Introducing the client to the backup doula
 - Suggesting that another member of DONA International or other doula may be more appropriate for the situation

Initials: _____

- Contacting a DONA International regional representative or local doula organization for names of other doulas in the area
- Following up with the client or backup doula to make sure the client's needs are being accommodated

III. Training and Experience

- Training.*** Completion of a DONA International approved birth doula workshop is but one step in the process of training and certification. Doulas who are certified by DONA International will have completed all the requirements as set forth in the DONA International Requirements for Birth Doula Certification.
- Experience.*** Doulas certified by DONA International will have the experience as set forth in the DONA International Requirements for Birth Doula Certification.
- Maintenance of Certification.*** DONA International certified doulas will maintain certification as outlined in the DONA International recertification packet. Recertification must be completed after each three-year period of practice.

By signing this document, I agree to abide by DONA International's Standards of Practice.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

BirthWell Partners Primary Labor Support and Backup Protocol for Volunteer/Work-Study Doulas

This protocol has been drafted for two reasons: 1) We want to make sure that no BWP client is ever left to labor alone once they've decided they need a doula with them, and 2) We want to make sure that no doula will be "stuck" at a long birth beyond the point where they feel capable of providing good service. Therefore, it is expected that all doulas will have backup and are able to serve as backup for other doulas. Based on availability, backup contract doula support should be sought in this order: 1) other work-study or volunteer doulas, 2) contract doulas.

On-Call Period:

1. Primary and backup doula should be available, have continuous cellular service (or advanced notification with the other doula when this is not possible), and be within a 1.5 hour drive of the hospital where the BWP Client will be giving birth, **starting 3 weeks before the Estimated Due Date (EDD) and until the baby is born and immediate post-birth support has ended.**
2. The primary doula will give the backup a client summary at least 2 weeks before the client's EDD. This summary should be given in a manner that is HIPPA-compliant* to preserve client privacy, and include all relevant information about the client's preferences, contact information, and birth plan (if there is one).
3. The primary doula will provide the backup doula's contact information to their client and will communicate the schedule to the client and the backup.
4. Primary and backup doulas will make every effort to avoid changes in schedule starting 2 weeks before the EDD. If the doula or backup doula's schedule changes, they must communicate changes with their partner doula as soon as they are aware of them **AND assist with making arrangements for another doula to serve as backup.**

**Sharing documents through Google Drive or Dropbox is HIPPA-compliant; however, sharing client information by email or text is not.*

During Labor:

1. The primary or backup doula should begin providing in-person support within 2 hours of being notified by a client that they need in-person emotional or physical support for their labor. Virtual support during labor should only occur if pre-approved by the BirthWell Staff.

WORK-STUDY COMMITMENT: ATTACHMENT B

2. A doula who arrives to provide doula support at a client's request should plan to stay unless the client asks the doula to leave, or until an arranged backup arrives. If a client wants support at the start of an overnight induction, it is acceptable for the doula to be present at the start of induction, leave, and return when client again requests in-person doula support. If a situation appears to be unusual and the doula is not certain about whether it is okay to leave and return, the doula should consult a BirthWell Staff member.
3. A doula who needs to leave the hospital after a client has requested support should wait until a backup arrives. If a doula has a family emergency and needs to leave immediately, they should notify BWP staff immediately.
4. While supporting a client in labor, doulas may take a break for a meal, to use the bathroom, or to make a necessary phone call, provided they remain accessible to their client by phone and/or text, and are able to return within 15 minutes' notice.
5. The primary doula will let the backup doula know when they are leaving to attend a birth, and give the backup doula a specific or estimated time that they could be needed to take over if labor is ongoing. The backup doula should assume they will be needed 12-24 hours after the primary doula has set out to provide support, and plan accordingly.
6. Unless hospital policy prevents doulas from "swapping out," a primary doula may call in help after 12-24 hours and at their discretion, or for special circumstances. They must alert and confirm with the backup 4-6 hours in advance of when backup will be needed.
7. The doula attending the birth will let the other doula know when the baby is born and immediate post-birth services have been provided, and that they are no longer on call.
8. If a BWP client fails to notify the doula that in-hospital support is desired, (for example, when a client says labor progressed too quickly to notify the doula), the doula should still offer immediate post-birth support at the hospital and/or postpartum visits within the first 6 weeks unless the client does not want the support. The doula should fill in the birth data form with as much information as they are able to gather from the client.
9. If a BWP client notified the doula that they wanted in-hospital support, but the birth happened too quickly for the doula to arrive before the birth (doula has 2 hours from time of notification), the doula should provide 1-2 hours of immediate post-birth support at the hospital and do postpartum visits. The doula should fill in the birth data form with as much information as they are able to gather from the client.

WORK-STUDY COMMITMENT: ATTACHMENT B

10. If a BWP client goes into labor before 37 weeks gestation, the primary doula will attend if possible. If primary doula is not available, they will contact backup doula to see if they are available. If neither the primary or backup doula is available, the primary doula will contact BWP staff and alert them to the situation so a support plan can be created, if possible.
11. Missing a full-term (37-42 weeks gestation) client birth is a serious breach of trust with the BWP client and with BirthWell Partners. If a BWP client notified the doula that they wanted in-hospital support, but the doula did not arrive within 2 hours of notification, or arrange for backup, or contact BWP staff to alert them to reasonable cause for delay, the doula will be asked to meet with BWP staff and may be released from taking more clients. Furthermore, the doula will need to communicate with BWP staff before providing postpartum services to verify whether they should provide these services.
12. If a client asks a doula to leave, the doula should contact BWP staff immediately.
13. If a doula is confronted by hospital staff for any reason, including interfering with a client's medical care or acting outside of the doula's scope of practice, the doula should provide hospital staff with the Executive Director's cell number (205-222-0343) and also contact BWP staff as soon as possible.
14. If hospital staff asks a doula to leave, the doula should contact BWP staff immediately.

I _____ agree to adhere to this labor support and backup protocol.

Signature

Date

BirthWell Staff Contact Information:

Susan Petrus
Executive Director
205-222-0343

Renee Hood
Program Assistant
205-454-8120

Kendra Burrell
Doula Coordinator
205-401-7106