



PALS Doulas Code of Ethics

I. Rules of Conduct

a. Propriety

The Certified Doula will maintain high standards of personal conduct in their labor support capacity and/or identity.

b. Competence and Professional Development

The Certified Doula will strive to become and remain proficient in the professional practice and performance of labor support functions through continuing education, affiliation with related organizations, and associations with other doulas.

c. Integrity

The Certified Doula will act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity.

II. Ethical Responsibility to Clients

a. Primacy of Client's Interests

The Certified Doula's primary responsibility is to their clients.

b. Rights and Prerogatives of Clients

The Certified Doula will make every effort to foster maximum self-determination on the part of their clients.

c. Confidentiality and Privacy

The Certified Doula will respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional services.

d. Obligation to Serve

The Certified Doula will assist each client seeking labor support either by providing services or making appropriate referrals.

e. Reliability

When the Certified Doula agrees to work with a particular client, the obligation is to do so reliably, without fail, for the term of the agreement. The agreement (verbal or written) will clearly state any limitations on the doula's availability and include clear backup plans for such situations when the doula is unavailable. (See Continuity of Care as outlined in Standards of Practice.)

f. Fees

When setting fees, the Certified Doula will ensure they are fair, reasonable, considerate, and commensurate with service performed and with due regard for the client's ability to pay. The Certified Doula must clearly state their fees to the client and describe the services provided, terms of payment, and refund policies.

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II. Ethical Responsibility to Doula Colleagues

- a. Respect, Fairness, and Courtesy.
The Certified Doula will treat colleagues with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith.
- b. Dealing with Colleagues' Clients.
The Certified Doula has the responsibility to relate to the clients of colleagues with full professional consideration.

III. Ethical Responsibilities to Health Care Providers of the Client

- a. Respect, Fairness, and Courtesy.
The Certified Doula will treat their client's caregivers with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith.
- b. Recognition of Clinical Responsibility.
The Certified Doula recognizes that responsibility for clinical management belongs to the Health Care Provider (nurse, midwife, physician) and the client. The Certified Doula does not interfere with clinical management beyond making suggestions to, or asking questions of, the Health Care Provider and client, based on their knowledge of the client's birth plan and preferences.

IV. Ethical Responsibility to the Doula Profession

- a. Maintaining the Integrity of the Profession.
The Certified Doula will uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession.
- b. Community Service.
The Certified Doula is encouraged to assist the profession by making reduced cost or no cost labor support services available when possible.

V. Ethical Responsibility to Society

- a. Promotion of Maternal, Paternal, and Child Welfare.
The Certified Doula will promote the general health of laboring families and their babies, and whenever possible, that of their family and friends as well.