

All About Doula's

Can a Doula practice without state recognition?

The short answer is "yes".

While government regulation seems to be an increasing reality, what has yet to be seen are restrictions on lay, non-certified doulas. *This means that a doula may practice without any state regulated certification, choosing the certification company of their choice, or no certification at all.* So though government is seeking to get involved in allowing funding, the intent doesn't seem to be to control the work of doulas. Hopefully, government regulations will allow lay and community-based doulas to continue without devaluing their work as non-certified doulas.

Colorado currently has no known efforts at this time to add laws for doulas.

With that said; there are a lot of lay people that have ample training. Some are trained more than any certification training will ever offer them. Just because they choose not pay a company for a piece of paper that states they can do what they have been trained for, does not mean they are not fully qualified.

Who was the first Certifying Organization and when did they start?

In 1992, Doulas of North America (later DONA International) became the first organization to train and certify doulas, prior to this there was no certification.

Don't get me wrong here; I believe that Western Medicine has its place and if I needed surgery or had an emergency that's where I would head. However; I don't agree with unfair pricing or insurance companies raping us because they can, in return who pays? We do, with incredibly high premiums! "Premiums for family coverage cost an average of \$7,061 in 2001 and rose to an average of \$22,221 in 2021." Check out the evidence here:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2022/02/04/a-bump-in-insurance-premiums-what-it-means-for-2022-and-beyond/?sh=305f93444b86>

As we all know, Western medicine is Government run, Hospitals, most medical offices, Insurance companies, Pharmacies, the FDA and certifying companies are businesses, so if they are a business "which they are" that would mean they make money off us and they make it very hard for privately owned companies to survive. Studies show; that one of the most expensive pieces of equipment on the maternity floor is the Electronic fetal monitoring (EFM) they require all clients to use it at

minimum 10 minutes per hour? "Most described using it either continuously (60%) or for most of the time during labor (20%)" "One concerning finding was that people in the continuous electronic fetal monitoring group were 63% more likely to have a Cesarean and 15% more likely to experience the use of vacuum or forceps when compared to those in the hands-on listening group." Check out the evidence here <https://evidencebasedbirth.com/fetal-monitoring/> enough said!

Doula certification information

It is not a requirement to become certified as a doula. But what it does this mean is that you have had formal training through a company. Can a person be a great Doula without formal training? Well of course! There are many great people that had no schooling or training that became great at what they do Presidents Abraham Lincoln & Andrew Jackson, Rockefeller, Henry Ford, Churchill, Einstein, Edison, The Wright Brothers, Amelia Earhart and many more

Without some kind of training and understanding of birth it may be hard to truly have a positive impact on birth in an educational and physical way. Doulas provide emotional, physical, educational and spiritual support. And there are many ways one can acquire training in all four of these areas.

Some skills that are needed are learning ways to help babies get in a better position, comfort measures, knowledge of and stages of labor, the birthing process, prenatal and postpartum health and wellness and providing support without stepping outside of your scope of practice, to name a few.

Depending on the certifier such as DONA International, CAPPA, ICEA, Etc. a doula certification program can cost you anywhere from \$300 - \$3500. Of course, that cost all depends on whether your certification requires a lot of Extra classes, additional study materials, certification fees, membership fees, etc. you also have to take in consideration your travel expenses such as; room and board, meals, for any qualifying classes, cost of the class itself and supplies, required reading on their list and where (city and state) these class and your certifying class is held. For us that are rural, it can be a distance from where we live.

And in most cases to recertify this will also mean these costs every 3 years or you will lose your certification? (Again it is not required in any state to be certified!) In addition if you wish to learn related topics like breastfeeding support, baby wearing, etc., you will need to attend the additional courses which can add up to \$100's or \$1000's more.

Investing in doula training every three years is entirely voluntary, since doulas are not medical practitioners and it is not required. You have to decide if certification and having credentials are worth the cost to ensure you can provide quality birth support. In our rural area, I believe that word of mouth is everything. If you learn

the skills needed and you provide a good honest service to clients they will share their experience with others.

To choose the best doula training, I suggest looking into many programs to see what their training entails. Consider your individual needs, such as how much time and money you want to invest in training yearly/every 3 years or just once with optional classes of your choice.

Many birth work courses/training such as lactation/breastfeeding, are offered to the public through various venues, through colleges, on line or self-study. At various costs ranging

Next steps to begin your doula training

Once decided, you get trained and then you are ready to start your career as a doula. Once trained I highly encourage you to do these 4 things:

1: Get in touch with your local doula community and get involved. Word of mouth is the best way to gain clientele. The support and knowledge of other doulas is a wonderful asset to have. It will be good to befriend them, in the case that you need a backup or if they need one ;)

2: I encourage you to get to know those providers whom you will work in the birth community with: chiropractors, midwives, OB's, prenatal or postpartum massage therapists, birth photographers etc. These people can be great allies when it comes to gaining clients and friends and for when you need to refer out.

3: Be Teachable and Never stop learning; you can always pickup tricks of the trade and learn skills from those you work with, ask questions, continue your education take classes, read books and articles.

4: Be Loving, Be Kind, Be Honest, Be Gentle, Stay Humble and Earn Respect from others and Work Harder than anyone else.

How much money does a doula make?

A doula can make anywhere between \$300 to \$2,500 per birth and sometimes more, depending on the going rate for doulas in their community and if they offer other services.

How long does it take to become a doula?

It all depends on what route you take, self-taught to formal training or somewhere in between. Most doula formal training such as DONA, CAPP, ICEA, Etc. has a one to three day main course, and then a list of requirements for the final certification. This can be very expensive and can take time to acquire. Some requirements may take one month and some several to complete, while others years depending on the doula's motivation, class, birth, and resource availability.

*I offer Labor and Birth Doula Training and Postpartum Doula Training with Certification, at a reasonable price for more information read more under the Classes tab.

