

## **MT Doula Collaborative Code of Ethics for Doulas**

- The doula should strive to become and remain proficient in the professional practice and performance of professional duties.
- The doula should act in accordance with the highest standard of professional integrity.
- The doula will treat all colleagues in an ethical, professional, and respectful manner in all situations and promote ethical conduct within the profession.
- The doula will honor agreements and contracts for professional services
- The doula has a responsibility to maintain and advance their education, strategies, and resources in order to provide effective and evidence based support.

## **Montana Doula Collaborative Scope of Practice**

The roles of a doula fall under four separate categories. Those categories are physical support, emotional support, informational support, and advocacy support.

When providing emotional support doulas conduct a wide variety of care not limited to but including helping with the process before and after a reproductive event, building rapport between doula and client, words of affirmation and validation, and holding space for the range of feelings that can be present through the client's experience. This support is not isolated to just the client, but also to family members or other support people present. At times a doula is asked to act as an impartial barrier between the client and unwanted family, and visitors in the labor, pregnancy, or postpartum space.

Doulas are trained and skilled in a variety of tools to ease pregnancy and delivery. This may look like offering counterpressure or hands on techniques, assisting with different positions, helping create the birth space, being a constant presence during labor, assistance with postpartum bonding and breastfeeding.

The informational support given by doulas varies greatly. In this role doulas can focus on what aspects and nuances are best suited to them and their client. Doulas provide a list of resources for support and education, evidence-based information of procedures and best practice, and may make referrals to alternative clinical providers as needed. They also encourage clear communication with the medical team and advise family of any pertinent information when appropriate.

Advocacy support is about uplifting and supporting the client's voice. When navigating the medical world a client may need information to make the most empowered choice. The doula may facilitate clear communication between the client and medical staff to ensure that choice can be made. A doula may also be required to report any wrongdoing to the client to appropriate personnel.

The roles of a doula are various and beneficial to anyone who utilizes one. With that in mind doulas are not able to diagnose medical conditions or provide individualized recommendations as to specific treatments. They do not provide medical monitoring of a pregnancy or perform clinical tasks such as cervical checks or fetal heart monitoring. They also do not practice under the title of other modalities they may have without clearly specifying they are doing so. For this reason doulas require no medical supervision or oversight.