



Professional and Ethical Standards of Conduct for Certified Doulas

Purpose

This document defines the standards of conduct for all Doulas certified by the Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition within the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Professional and ethical standards of conduct for doulas

The standards of conduct for certified Doulas include:

- (1) Use of Title: A Certified Doula shall only identify themselves as a Certified Doula while in the possession of a current certificate.
- (2) Misrepresentation of Credentials: A Certified Doula shall not misrepresent their credentials related to the practice of providing doula care including but not limited to those indicating education, type of certification, professional experience, or any other credential related to their work as a doula.
- (3) Practice under False or Different Name: A Certified Doula shall engage in providing doula services only under the name in which such certification has been issued.
- (4) Acts within Scope of Practice: A Certified Doula shall only perform acts within the scope of doula practice as defined in the Doula Certification Program Guidelines.
- (5) Competency: A Certified Doula shall only assume those duties and responsibilities within their scope of practice and for which they have acquired and maintained necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- (6) Responsibility and Accountability: A Certified Doula shall be responsible and accountable for their judgements, actions, and competency in the course of performing their duties as a Certified Doula.
- (7) Documentation: A Certified Doula shall maintain a signed informed consent form for each client they serve. This form shall contain a description of risks and benefits of care provided and the extent of confidentiality between the client and the doula.



- (8) Falsification of Information: A Certified Doula shall not knowingly falsify or attempt to falsify, any documentation or information related to any aspect of certification as a doula or the practice of providing doula services.
- (9) Alteration or Destruction of Records: A Certified Doula shall not inappropriately destroy or alter any records related to their work as a Certified Doula.
- (10) Discrimination: A Certified Doula shall not withhold or deny care or services based on age, ancestry, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, color, religious creed, national origin, diagnosis, or mental or physical disability.
- (11) Client Abuse, Neglect, Mistreatment or Other Harm: A Certified Doula shall not abuse, neglect, mistreat, or otherwise harm a client.
- (12) Infection Control: A Certified Doula shall not place themselves or others at undue risk for the transmission of infectious diseases.
- (13) Client Dignity and Privacy: A Certified Doula shall safeguard a client's dignity and right to privacy.
- (14) Client Confidential Information: A Certified Doula shall safeguard client information from any person or entity, or both, not entitled to such information. A Certified Doula shall share appropriate information only as required by law or authorized by the client for the well-being or protection of the client.
- (15) Sexual Contact: A Certified Doula shall not have sexual contact with any client with whom they have a current doula/client relationship or with any former client who may be vulnerable by virtue of disability, age, illness, or cognitive ability.
- (16) Professional Boundaries: A Certified Doula shall establish and observe professional boundaries with respect to any client with whom they have a current doula/client relationship. A Certified Doula shall continue to observe professional boundaries with their former clients who may be vulnerable by virtue of disability, age, illness, or cognitive ability.
- (17) Exercise of Undue Influence: A Certified Doula shall not exercise undue influence on a client, including the promotion or sale of services, goods, appliances, or drugs, in such a manner as to exploit the client for financial gain of the Certified Doula or third party.



- (18) Borrowing from Clients: A Certified Doula shall not borrow money, materials, or other property from any client.
- (19) Undue Benefit or Gain: A Certified Doula shall interact with clients without undue burden or gain to the Certified Doula or third party.
- (20) Relationship Affecting Professional Judgement: A Certified Doula shall not initiate or maintain a doula/client relationship that is likely to adversely affect the doula's professional judgement.
- (21) Advertising: A Certified Doula shall not engage in false, deceptive, or misleading advertising related to doula work.
- (22) Fraudulent Practices: A Certified Doula shall not engage in any fraudulent practice including, but not limited to, billing for services not rendered or submitting false claims for reimbursement.
- (23) Impersonation: A Certified Doula shall not impersonate another doula or other health care provider, or knowingly allow or enable another person to impersonate them.
- (24) Aiding Unlawful Activity: A Certified Doula shall not aid any person in performing any act prohibited by law or regulation.
- (25) Circumvention of Law: A Certified Doula shall not receive from, or offer, give, or promise anything of value or benefit to, any official to circumvent any federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- (26) Practice While Impaired: A Certified Doula shall not act as a doula while impaired. Impaired means the inability to practice as a doula with reasonable judgment, skill, and safety by reason of alcohol or drug use, use of other substances, a physical or mental illness or condition, or by any combination of the foregoing.
- (27) Unlawful Acquisition and Possession of Controlled Substances: A Certified Doula shall not unlawfully obtain or possess controlled substances.
- (28) Duty to Report to the Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition: A Certified Doula who directly observes another doula or health care professional engaged in any of the following shall report that individual to the Bureau:
 - a. Abuse of a client;



- b. Practice of doula work while impaired by substance use;
- c. Diversion of controlled substances

(29) Violence: A Certified Doula shall not endanger the safety of the public, clients, or coworkers by making actual or implied threats of violence or carrying out an act of violence.

(30) Compliance with Agreements and Orders: A Certified Doula shall comply with all provisions contained:

- a. In any agreement they have entered into with the Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition; or
- b. In any order issued to them by the Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition.