



Learn more about the Doula Certification Program CORI Check

Our commitment to fairness and inclusion

We believe everyone deserves a fair opportunity to become a Certified Doula. Having a criminal record does **not** automatically disqualify you from certification. We understand that people's lives include complex experiences and that healing, rehabilitation, and growth are possible.

Our goal is to balance **community safety** with **fair access** to meaningful work in birth and family care.

When and how CORI checks are conducted

- The CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) background check is **the final step** in the certification process.
- It is completed **only after** you meet all other certification requirements.
- If your CORI report shows an offense that could affect eligibility, you will be contacted by the Doula Initiative team and can provide more information.
- Every case is reviewed individually and respectfully.

Your rights in the review process

If your CORI includes information that might affect eligibility:

1. You'll receive a **written notice** with a copy of your CORI report.
2. You'll then have **10 business days** to submit more information or corrections.
3. You'll receive a written decision and explanation of certification approval or denial.

Why require a CORI check?

Because doulas work closely with individuals and families during medically and emotionally vulnerable times, the Doula Certification Program must ensure that Certified Doulas can provide safe, trustworthy care. The CORI check is a state-



authorized background review that helps rule out candidates with patterns of behavior likely to harm future clients.

What will the CORI check be looking at?

The CORI check shows **criminal convictions and open or pending cases** in Massachusetts. It does **not** include the following:

- arrests without conviction;
- juvenile or sealed records; or
- cases that ended in dismissal, a not-guilty finding, or resolved without conviction.

The review focuses on your ability to work safely as a doula. Every case is looked at **individually**. The team considers the nature of the offense, time since it occurred, and evidence of rehabilitation.

What CORI records will prevent me from becoming certified?

Certification may be denied if a record shows a serious offense that involves direct harm, exploitation, or violence, such as:

- sexual assault,
- human trafficking, or
- abuse of a vulnerable person;
- and if the offense is found to pose a continuing risk to client safety or public trust.

Other offenses, like older misdemeanors more than 5 years old or matters unrelated to professional conduct, typically will not affect eligibility.

How we evaluate CORI findings

If an offense appears on your record, we assess:

- the nature and seriousness of the offense;
- the circumstances of the offense;
- how much time has passed since the event;



- your age at the time;
- whether it was a single offense or repeated;
- whether the offense involved violence, abuse, or exploitation; and
- whether it directly relates to the duties of a doula.

We also consider any evidence of rehabilitation, education, recovery, or community service.

Mitigating and rehabilitative factors

We actively look for:

- evidence of rehabilitation, education, or training;
- participation in treatment programs or community service;
- stable work history, especially in caregiving roles;
- letters of reference or community recommendations; and
- actions that demonstrate trustworthiness and accountability since the offense.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact DPH-Douglas@mass.gov.