

# BLISSFUL BIRTHING

## **What is a birth doula's role?**

A birth doula will accompany you during your birth to help ensure a satisfying birth experience. She will help provide you and your partner with emotional, physical, and informational support, help communicate your needs and wants to your birth attendants and assist in providing you with education to aid in informed decisions about your birth.

She can provide reassurance, relaxation and visualization techniques, suggestions for positioning including the birth ball, peanut ball, hot and cold packs, help with backache and back labor pain, music, acupressure, and other client specific needs. She can also give you access to Blissful Birthing's pregnancy and birth library. As your doula, she works for YOU, not your caregiver or hospital.

## **Prenatal Meeting(s):**

We prefer to meet with you and your partner at least once prior to labor. In the meeting, we will clarify your priorities, concerns and any fears you may have for the upcoming birth. This meeting will help your doula understand what you desire for your birth experience, and what, if any, homework she will need to do in order to more effectively aid you and your partner. Additionally, we can work on your birth plan, discuss your feelings about pain and coping strategies, work on desired labor positions, and finalize any questions or concerns you may have regarding your labor and birth. This meeting typically lasts between 1-2 hours. We may also decide on other meetings, and will remain in touch by telephone and/or e-mail communication.

## **When You Are in Labor:**

Please call your doula even if you are unsure if you are in labor or just "feel different." She can answer questions and make suggestions over the phone. She can then decide if she should come to you immediately or wait for further change. She usually needs 90 minutes to get to you from the time you request that she come. We will also decide whether to meet at your home or at the hospital. She will remain with you throughout active labor and birth. If, due to extraordinary circumstances, your doula is unable to be with you, her back-up doula will come. She may also call her back-up if she is sick or your labor proceeds longer than 24 hours and she believes it is in your best interest to have a change in birth support. Company e-mail is [blissfulbirthingtn@gmail.com](mailto:blissfulbirthingtn@gmail.com). If she does not answer her cell and you are in labor, please call (859) 533-4667. You are also allowed to text or call at any time.

## **Elective and Emergency Cesarean**

Your doula will accompany you to the hospital for an elective cesarean, and be present with you during the birth (as the hospital policy allows) to provide support, information on what to expect, and assistance in making your cesarean birth a positive experience. With a Cesarean Surgery she will provide support during the cesarean (as allowed by hospital and/or doctor policies) and immediately after the same as she does for a vaginal birth client.

In some cases she can come into the OR with you after your partner goes with the baby (if the baby must be taken out of the operating room for medical purposes). Post surgery she will help with initial breastfeeding, answer questions about recovery from a cesarean, and let you know what to expect in the first few days afterward.

In the case of an emergency Cesarean, support personnel are usually not permitted in the OR; Your doula will remain in the labor room and be present with your partner to provide support during the surgery and will provide you support after the procedure.

### **After Birth:**

Your doula will remain with you for up to two hours after the birth to make sure you are settled and comfortable. She can also help you initiate breastfeeding. Your doula will be available to you by phone for up to six weeks after your birth. During the first two weeks, we will schedule a postpartum appointment to review the birth, help with breastfeeding, admire the baby, answer any questions, and obtain your feedback.

### **Limitations of Doula Practice:**

As a doula, she does not

- perform clinical tasks such as blood pressure, vaginal exams, fetal heart tone checks and other such duties. Her role is non-medical.
- make decisions for you. She will help you get the information you need to make your own informed decisions. She will also remind you if a decision involves a departure from your original birth plan.
- speak to the staff instead of you or your partner regarding matters where decisions are being made. She will discuss your concerns with you and suggest options, but you or your partner will speak on your behalf to the clinical staff.
- make clinical assessments or decisions concerning your labor and birth. Therefore, she assumes no responsibility, personally or professionally, for the outcome of your birth.
- Drive you or your child(ren) in her personal vehicle. This policy is due to insurance and liability. If emergency transportation is needed, an ambulance will be called. Otherwise, she can help arrange Lyft, Uber, a taxi, etc. and accompany you.

**Fees for Doula Services:**

including the following services:

- One prenatal visit (more as needed per doula discretion)
- Assistance in writing your birth plan.
- Unlimited telephone and email support during pregnancy and for six weeks following your birth.
- Blissful Birthing Online Childbirth Class
- Providing resources and/or referrals
- Use of a rebozo and breathing beads while you are our client
- Virtual Parenting 101 Class
- Labor support at home, birthing center, or hospital as described above.
- Postpartum visit
- Prayer either silent or verbal. We are Christians who love to incorporate scriptures and prayers to support you.

The \$250 deposit is to be paid when you sign this contract. This fee is a nonrefundable deposit and secures your birth on our calendar. The deposit fee is non-refundable if you cancel doula services after signing this contract or if you do not call your birth doula for your labor.

The remainder is to be paid by the 36th week of pregnancy.

This fee does not cover the cost of having your doula attend childbirth classes with you, shopping for baby supplies with you, organizing your home or nursery, accompanying you to a doctor appointment, postpartum doula support (cleaning, meal preparation, child care, frequent home visits) or overnight baby nursery care. The cost for these services is an additional (beyond the doula fee) \$40 an hour.

Cancellation more than eight weeks before your due date: 75% refund, less costs of any prenatal visits made. *The cost of each prenatal visit for this purpose is \$200 in addition to your nonrefundable deposit.*

Cancellation between five weeks and eight weeks before your due date: 50% refund, less the costs of any prenatal visits made. *The cost of each prenatal visit for this purpose is \$200 in addition to your nonrefundable deposit.*

Cancellation 4 weeks or less before your due date: no refund.

**Unforeseen Circumstances:**

If you plan a vaginal delivery, and a cesarean is performed after the onset of labor, your doula will continue to provide support during the cesarean surgery (as allowed by hospital

and/or doctor policies) as well as immediately after to help with your comfort and breastfeeding. She will also follow-up with you after the birth, as she does with all of her clients. In this scenario, the full fee applies, and no refund will be given.

If you require a scheduled Cesarean Surgery, your doula will accompany you to the hospital during your intake and recovery. Occasionally, hospitals allow a second support person to be prepped outside of the Operating Room (only one support person is allowed inside the O.R in most hospitals.) in case your partner is needed elsewhere with the baby. With a planned Cesarean Surgery she will provide support during the cesarean (as allowed by hospital and/or doctor policies) or wait in your labor room and give support immediately after birth the same as she does for a vaginal birth client. In this scenario, the full fee applies, and no refund will be given.

In the event that your doula is unable to attend your birth due to the following: illness, supporting another client who is in labor, or some unforeseen circumstance; she will provide another experienced doula to attend your birth in her place.

### ♥Client Responsibilities

- Honest communication of medical conditions or emotional situations that may affect your birth experience.
- Contact by phone, text, or e-mail following each visit to your health care provider.
- Contact with a phone call regarding any hospital admittance or non-routine medical testing. A text is not ok with an emergency or labor signs.
- Contact with a phone call when labor begins or suspected labor begins. A text to the doula is not sufficient and a phone call is necessary. If the doula does not answer, call her again. If she does not return your call within a hour, call Rebekah at 859-533-4667. Remember that the doula needs 90 minutes to get to you from the time you request that she come.
- Upon admission to the hospital, inform the staff that your doula will be attending your birth and notify your doula.
- If planning a home birth, give your doula contact info to the home birth midwife and the midwife number to your doula.
- Provide at least one week's notice in scheduling antepartum, postpartum visits, and any additional services.

### FAILURE TO PROVIDE SERVICES:

Your doula will make every effort to provide the services described here. If her failure to attend your birth is due to her error, there will be no charge for services and we will refund the doula fee, minus the deposit plus \$100 per prenatal visit in person or virtual.

If your doula's failure to attend your birth is due to an error on your part (failing to call your birth doula, for example) no refund will be given, and we will keep the full fee.

If your doula's failure to attend your birth is due to a rapid labor (baby is born less than one hour after you call and ask her to come), no refund will be given, and we will keep the full fee.

Any other circumstances out of your doula's control that result in her absence at your birth (an act of God like a tornado or pandemic) will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, and may or may not result in a refund.

**Limitations of liability**

To the fullest extent permitted by applicable laws, our liability for any and all claims, losses, expenses, injuries, or damages related to the performance of services under this contract of whatsoever nature and howsoever arising whether in in contract or otherwise shall be limited to the amount paid by the pursuant of this contract.

We will not be liable for any direct, indirect, incidental, special, or consequential damages, resulting from the provision or non-provision of services under this contract, even if the possibility of such damages has been specifically advised.

In signing this contract, the client understands and agrees with all the points herein. The client further agrees that she has been given the opportunity to raise any questions that she might have concerning services and that these questions have been answered to her satisfaction

**Photography**

We take pictures and videos to record your birth for you as our service to you allows. The client consents and agrees that Blissful Birthing TN has the right to take photographs, video, or make digital recordings of your pregnancy, labor and or newborn experiences. The client will have access to these photos for 2 months and after that time will be deleted. These are the client's to keep, print and use as desired.

**Agreement:**

The client recognizes that Blissful Birthing TN has doulas trained to assist with the physical and emotional demands of labor and childbirth. The birth doula is not a medical professional and therefore will neither advise us on medical decisions nor perform medical assessments or procedures. The client also recognizes that childbirth is a natural and unpredictable process and may not go as hoped or planned; in this arena the client understands that a doula will act with reasonable care for the mother and baby's well-being, but will not be able to alter the course of labor or its outcomes. The client has read this form describing Blissful Birthing TN birth doula services and agrees that it reflects the agreement.

Signed:

Client \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Partner \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Doula \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you! We look forward to working with you and meeting your beautiful new baby!