



ADVANCING DOULAS IN MICHIGAN

In order for pregnant and postpartum women and their families in our state to experience the benefits of a doula who can provide information along with emotional and physical support, services must be more accessible and affordable.

Doulas have shown to be an empowering and effective resource to improve birth outcomes and reduce the racial disparities in birth outcomes.

Policy considerations to enhance the availability and viability of doulas:

- Enact legislation to include coverage of doulas in the state's Medicaid program.
- Create coordinating Medicaid policy to recognize doulas that meet minimum criteria, including educational standards, and set reimbursement rate at sufficient/sustainable level.
- Enact legislation to require all insurers to cover doulas as a component of pregnancy coverage.
- Explore incorporation of funding for doulas into existing perinatal care programs such as some home visiting programs and as an extension of prenatal care delivery.
- Incorporate information about the role of doulas and their impact on outcomes of doulas in the education of all medical providers involved in maternity care.
- Prohibit hospital policies that restrict doula participation as part of a birthing care team and clarify that doulas should not be counted as family members or visitors.

All policy creation around doulas should include the voices of doulas and individuals who have utilized doulas from around the state, from a diversity of perspective and communities. Doulas and their supporters should actively consider mechanisms to promote a collective voice.



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