

Draft Language for Standing Doula Recommendation, Timeline, Stakeholder Engagement

HCA and DOH

- *In recognition that pregnancy and infant outcomes are a key indicator for population level health and well-being, and*
- *In an evidence-based effort to improve birthing people and infant health outcomes and decrease inequities we observe in those outcomes,*

I have determined based upon the scientific evidence and my professional experience that doula services would benefit all pregnant or postpartum people, infants and their families in WA State.

Doulas are trained professionals who provide physical, emotional and informational support to pregnant, birthing, and postpartum people and their families.

There is strong evidence that doula care is associated with better perinatal and infant outcomes, including reduced cesarean sections and other medical interventions, premature deliveries, length of labor, reduced anxiety and stress and increased breastfeedingⁱ. Doulas are also associated with higher patient satisfaction and are a promising strategy to address racial and ethnic disparities in perinatal and infant health outcomesⁱⁱ.

*I hereby recommend that doula services be offered immediately and on an ongoing basis to pregnant, birthing, and postpartum people in Washington until such time as determined no longer necessary.**

Sincerely,

XXXXXX

**For those who are covered by Medicaid, this recommendation fulfills the federal requirements in section 440.130(c) of title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations for a physician or other licensed practitioner of the health arts acting within their scope of practice to provide a written recommendation for preventive services.*

ⁱ Sobczak A, Taylor L, Solomon S, Ho J, Kemper S, Phillips B, Jacobson K, Castellano C, Ring A, Castellano B, Jacobs RJ. The Effect of Doulas on Maternal and Birth Outcomes: A Scoping Review. *Cureus*. 2023 May 24;15(5):e39451. doi: 10.7759/cureus.39451. PMID: 37378162; PMCID: PMC10292163.

ⁱⁱ Ramey-Collier K, Jackson M, Malloy A, McMillan C, Scraders-Pyatt A, Wheeler SM. Doula Care: A Review of Outcomes and Impact on Birth Experience. *Obstet Gynecol Surv*. 2023 Feb;78(2):124-127. doi: 10.1097/OGX.0000000000001103. PMID: 36786720.