

State Regulations for Community Doula Certification

Effective January 6, 2022, The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) established the minimum requirements to be considered a certified doula in Virginia based on the core competencies for doula certification used by national organizations and community based organizations in Virginia (See <http://register.dls.virginia.gov/details.aspx?id=9636>).

What is a community based-doula?

“Community-based doula” means a doula who often has shared lived experiences and is trained to provide extended, culturally congruent support to families throughout pregnancy to include antepartum, intrapartum, during labor and birth, and up to one year postpartum.

“Doula” means a trained nonmedical professional who provides continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to a pregnant person during the antepartum or intrapartum period or during the period up to one year postpartum.

The Role of Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

The State Board of Health will approve a certifying body that has adopted standards from a nationally recognized organization for community-based doula training and certification to establish certified doula training and education programs and to approve or accept continuing education courses for renewing doula certification in Virginia.

The Virginia Certification Board (VCB) will serve as the certifying body and will:

1. Maintain a registry of state-certified doulas that is accessible to the public and displays the certification status of doulas.
2. Submit to the State Board of Health an annual report by the end of every fiscal year that identifies the number of new and cumulative state-certified doulas and the number of new and cumulative training programs approved for the purpose of providing doula certification.

Steps to Completing State-Certification

1. Applicants must complete all required trainings facilitated by an approved training entity by VCB.
2. A State-Certified Doula Application must be completed in its entirety.
3. Applicants will pay a Certification Fee of \$100 to the VCB.
4. The completed application, copies of certificates of attendance, other required documents, and fee must be sent to VCB. Applications will be open in the Spring of 2022.

VCB

298 S. Progress Avenue
 Harrisburg, PA 17109

Phone: 804-741-2319 * Fax: 717-540-4458

Website: www.vacertboard.org

Email: info@vacertboard.org

Applicant Eligibility and Requirements for State-Certification

Who can apply to become a state-certified doula?

Anyone! Any person seeking to be a state-certified doula must meet the following qualifications and education requirements required by VDH:

- Hold a certification as a certified doula from the VCB approved by the State Board of Health **and**
- Complete at least 60 hours of doula training. Training shall be provided by one or more entities approved by VCB approved by the State Board of Health.

Training and Education Requirements (60 Hours):

Maternal and Infant Health Concepts and Approaches (2 hours)

Provision of perinatal support services from 1st trimester to twelve months postpartum; provision of emotional and social support, including navigating pregnancy loss

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Lactation anticipatory guidance and support (10 hours)

Service Coordination and System Navigation (20 hours)

- Provision of in-home prenatal and postpartum care support
- Assessing psychosocial and health needs, including perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) screening
- Goal setting and prioritization of psychosocial and health needs
- Antepartum (high-risk) maternal care support
- Labor support
- Education and referrals for developmental screenings
- Resource navigation for wraparound services (i.e. intimate partner violence, domestic violence, oral health, family planning)

Health Promotion and Prevention (8 hours)

Provision of perinatal health education, Provision of newborn parenting education, Provision of wellness and self-care coaching

Advocacy, Outreach and Engagement (5 hours)

Serving as an advocate for respectful maternal care, Intentional reflection of the community served, Care coordination and social service navigation, Provision of reproductive rights education, informed choice and decision making, and birth planning, Child abuse and neglect mandatory reporting

Communication (2 hours)

Respectful, client-centered maternal care, Active listening, Navigating patient families, medical support staff, and other support systems, Responding to challenges

Cultural Humility and Responsiveness (8 hours)

Intersectionality and cultural humility, including language access, Health literacy, Trauma-informed care

Ethical Responsibilities and Professionalism (5 hours)

Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, and HIPAA, Required charting and documentation, Serving as an accountability partner