ILLINOIS MEDICAID-CERTIFIED DOULA GUIDE

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Introduction

Doula services have historically emerged to improve positive birth outcomes and offer more culturally sensitive support for women. In 2022, Illinois passed legislation to compensate doulas for services provided within the Medical Assistance Program. **Act 102-0004, Title IX. Maternal and Infant Mortality, Article 175, Section 5-18.5** states in part:

> "perinatal doula services…shall be covered under the Medical Assistance Program…"

> "Perinatal doula services include regular visits beginning in the prenatal period and continuing into the postnatal period, inclusive of continuous support during labor and delivery, that support healthy pregnancies and positive birth outcomes."

> "The Department of Healthcare and Family Services…shall consider the expertise and consult with doula program experts, doula training providers, practicing doulas, and home visiting experts, along with State agencies implementing perinatal doula services…"

> "This body of experts shall inform the Department on the credentials necessary for perinatal doula…to be eligible for Medicaid reimbursement…"

The SIU School of Medicine created the Office of Certification Strategies which provides the administrative services to run the Illinois Medicaid-Certified Doula program with oversight and guidance provided by the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services.

Doulas who wish to be recognized as a Medicaid provider will first submit an application and other required documents to the Office of Certification Strategies. Once their application is approved, doulas can then begin the process of applying for enrollment in the Illinois Medicaid information management system called IMPACT (Illinois Medicaid Program Advanced Cloud Technology).

Illinois Medicaid-Certified Doula (IMCD) Scope of Practice

Illinois Medicaid-certified doulas are expected to be able to perform all of the following skills with the understanding that all skills are not necessary in every situation. However, the Office of Certification Strategies does not evaluate the performance of these skills.

Doula Scope of Practice

Prenatal Support

- Provide the client with appropriate evidence-based information on how to maintain a healthy pregnancy

- Counsel the client in making decisions related to general health and safety during the prenatal period

- Facilitate access to community resources designed to support nutrition during the prenatal period, such as TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), WIC (Women, Infants, and Children), and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)

- Facilitate access to community resources designed to support healthy pregnancies, including alcohol, tobacco and drug cessation resources

- Facilitate access to community resources designed to support a positive family dynamic, such as housing and transportation resources

- Provide the client with appropriate, evidence-based information pertaining to labor and delivery

- Provide comfort measures suitable to the client's needs

- Recommend coping skills suitable to the client's needs

- Honor the client's cultural and family traditions as they relate to the prenatal period

- Use relevant evidence-based information to assist the client in preparing a birth plan suited to the client's values and wishes, including the labor and delivery location and birthing preferences

- Honor cultural and family traditions as they relate to birth planning

- Encourage effective and open communication between you and the client and between the client and the client's partner

- Facilitate access to community resources designed to support a positive relationship between the client and the client's partner, including intimate partner violence resources

- Recognize complications that can arise during pregnancy, and refer the client to healthcare professionals when clinical assessment, medical diagnosis, or prescriptions are needed

- Provide the client with appropriate evidence-based information on changing family dynamics during pregnancy and after childbirth

- Refer the client to a medical professional to answer medical questions

Labor and Delivery
- Be continually present (in person) during labor and delivery

- Assist the client with carrying out the birth plan

- Honor cultural and family traditions as they pertain to labor and delivery

- Provide culturally appropriate emotional support

- Emotionally support clients in the manner in which they choose

- Emotionally support the client's partner and others present at the birth

- Provide the client with non-medical coping techniques such as alternative positions, movement, breathing techniques, or affirmation

- Provide hot or cold compresses/therapy to relieve stress or pain

- Help maintain a comfortable environment for the client

- Encourage those present at the birth to maintain a positive and respectful environment for the client

- Remain calm, and encourage those present at the birth to remain calm, if complications arise during labor and delivery

- Support and assist initial bonding between the client and the newborn

- Support and assist initial breastfeeding

Postpartum Support
- Provide the client with appropriate evidence-based information on postpartum self-care

- Facilitate access to community resources designed to support nutrition during the postpartum period, such as TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), WIC (Women, Infants, and Children), and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)

- Provide the client with appropriate evidence-based information on changing family dynamics during pregnancy and after childbirth

- Provide emotional support to the client and family during the postpartum period

- Facilitate access to community resources designed to support healthy parents and newborns, including alcohol, tobacco and drug cessation resources

- Facilitate access to community resources designed to support a positive family dynamic, such as housing and transportation resources

- Refer the client to healthcare professionals when clinical assessment, medical diagnosis, or prescriptions are needed

Newborn Care
- Provide evidence-based information on general health practices pertaining to newborn health

- Provide evidence-based information on infant feeding

- Provide general breastfeeding guidance and resources

- Provide the client and family with infant soothing and coping skills.

- Honor cultural and family traditions as they relate to infant care

Limitations of the Doula

- A doula does not perform medical procedures.

- A doula does not perform medical tasks, such as listening to fetal heart tones, examining the client's cervix, taking the client's blood pressure, or recommending over the counter medications, herbal remedies, or prescriptions.

- A doula does not make medical diagnoses or provide medical advice.

- A doula does not plan to be the only person present during a client's labor and delivery; a doula avoids attending births, including planned home births, without a healthcare provider* present.

*Healthcare providers include primary care providers, primary care physicians, OB/GYN physicians, and nurses.

The Code of Ethical Conduct

Service to Clients

- Doulas' primary responsibility is their client's wellbeing.

- Doulas advocate for their clients' best interests and wishes.

- Doulas provide clients with competent support during their prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum experiences.

- Doulas approach clients with compassion and respect and without judgment or bias.

- Doulas provide their clients with the current and accurate information so they can make informed decisions regarding their pregnancies, labor and deliveries, and postpartum periods.

- Doulas respect their clients' rights to make their own decisions regarding personal and medical choices.

Proficiency

- Doulas strive to remain proficient in the practice and functions of their profession through continuing education and learning opportunities.

- Doulas rely on evidence-based resources as they support clients through the prenatal, labor and delivery, and postnatal periods.

- Doulas rely on evidence-based resources as they support clients during the adjustment period of caring for themselves, their newborns, and their families.

Integrity and Professional Conduct

- Doulas willfully adopt honest and ethical behavior.

- Doulas remain current in best practices through affiliation with professional organizations and networking with other birth doulas.

- Doulas uphold the highest standards of professional integrity for themselves and other doulas.

- Doulas conduct themselves in a professional manner in their interactions with clients, colleagues, and healthcare providers and staff.

- Doulas are punctual and dependable in regards to client appointments and commitments.

- Doulas are obliged to provide their clients with reliable support and to uphold the service agreement.

Fair Dealing

- Doulas clearly communicate and thoroughly describe their scope of practice to their clients and provide this information in writing.

- Doulas clearly communicate and thoroughly describe service agreements to their clients. Both parties sign the service agreement to acknowledge their acceptance of the terms.

- Doulas comply with health insurance and Medicaid standards.

- Doulas provide their clients, Medicaid, and/or insurance providers with transparent and accurate billing.

Continuity of Care

- Once a service agreement has been signed, a doula will provide the agreed upon support during the prenatal period, labor and delivery, and postpartum period.

- Doulas provide continuous emotional and physical support during labor and delivery.

- Doulas are transparent and forthright in providing clients with information regarding their planned absences so that clients may make informed decisions regarding their own care.

- Doulas and clients identify potential back-up doulas to provide emotional and physical support during labor and delivery in the event an unforeseeable conflict or issue prevents the doula's attendance at the birth.

- Doulas will provide the assigned back-up birth doulas with their clients' personal information, birth plans, and relevant history. Back-up doulas regard this information with the same respect for privacy as their own clients' information.

- Doulas will provide appropriate referrals and resources to clients who require services outside the birth doulas' scope of practice. Doulas will encourage their clients to seek the assistance of their obstetrician or primary care physician, as appropriate.

Inclusivity and Accessibility

- Clients come from different cultural, religious, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds, and doulas care for clients regardless of their race, gender

identification, sexual orientation, economic status, and religious or political beliefs.

- Doulas are committed to providing services that are accessible to all, including people from underserved communities and individuals who require accommodations.

Confidentiality and Privacy

- Doulas respect the privacy of their clients and protect their health information and personal information, including personal identifying information, details regarding their labors and deliveries, and any intimate details regarding their personal lives.

- Doulas are trained in and follow the requirements of the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) Privacy Rule.

Professional Relationships, Collaboration, and Advocacy

- Doulas treat their colleagues with respect and professional courtesy.

- Doulas resolve professional disagreements with their colleagues in a constructive manner.

- Doulas recognize that their roles in their clients' labor and deliveries in medical facilities mean they are guests of those facilities.

- Doulas acknowledge they are not their clients' primary care providers and will not interfere with the primary care providers' care of their patients.

- Doulas will make suggestions and respectfully ask questions based on the doula's understanding of their clients' preferences.

- Doulas will advocate for their clients' wishes to the medical staff.

- Doulas will strive to collaborate respectfully and productively with the healthcare team/medical professionals while supporting best interests of their clients.

Illinois Medicaid-Certified Doula Application Instructions and Checklist

This guide provides you (the applicant) with more details and a checklist to help you successfully submit the Illinois Medicaid-Certified Doula Application. To understand

what's needed for certification and to complete the application, read these instructions and the remainder of the guide.

Certification Pathway Options and Common Requirements

There are two options to apply for certification: through the **Training Program Pathway** and the **Legacy Pathway**. The Training Program Pathway is designed for doulas who completed a doula training program within the last five (5) years and have less work experience. The Legacy Pathway is for doulas with more work experience but who haven't completed a doula training program within the last five years.

Common requirements apply to both pathway options; they are listed below and also in Table 1 in the next section of this guide.

- At least 18 years of age
- Signed submission of the Illinois Doula Certification Program application form
- Current CPR or basic life support (BLS) certificate
- HIPAA compliance training
- Cultural competency/Implicit bias training
- Trauma-informed care training
- Anatomy and physiology training related to pregnancy, labor, and birth

Training Program Pathway

Doulas who have completed a doula training program within the last five (5) years may apply through the Training Program Pathway. Applicants who completed training at a pre-approved training organization will submit to the address below a Training Verification Form completed by a representative of a pre-approved doula training program. A list of pre-approved training organizations is available on the SIU School of Medicine's doula certification website.

An applicant who attended a training organization not on the pre-approved list may still apply. A syllabus or topical outline that shows training in prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum support must be submitted in addition to a Training Verification Form completed by a representative of the doula training program.

Training Program Pathway applicants must also have served as a lead doula or shadowed a lead doula in at least three (3) births over the past 12 months.

Options for submitting the Training Verification Form:

Option 1: Ask the organization to mail a hardcopy of the verification form to:

Office of Certification Strategies
SIU School of Medicine, Behavioral Health Workforce Center
319 E. Madison, 4M
PO Box 19673
Springfield, IL 62702

Option 2: A link to the Training Verification Form link is available on the SIU School of Medicine doula website. The organization representative can access the link and complete the form online.

Special note: During the initial application period, if an applicant following the Training Program Pathway discovers it is difficult to contact their training organization to request they complete the Training Verification Form may submit their certificate of completion as evidence of completion. The certificate should show the name of organization, title of the person signing the document, their signature, and date.

Legacy Pathway

The Legacy Pathway is designed for doulas who have more doula work experience or applicants who completed a doula training program more than five year ago. Legacy Pathway applicants must show they've supported at least five (5) clients during prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum periods over the past three (3) years.

Please note: The purpose of the Legacy Pathway is to allow doulas who have more work experience prior to 2024 and/or those who completed doula training programs more than five year ago the opportunity to apply for certification. However, the Legacy Pathway option is temporary and will only be available for 18 to 24 months.

Experience Verification

No matter which pathway you choose, you will need to verify your experience working as a doula. You will need to ask your clients, a healthcare provider, or lead/mentoring doula to complete and submit an Experience Verification Form. Your references will enter your name, email, and phone number. The form will capture the doula services you provided to the clients (prenatal, birth, and/or postpartum periods).

Option 1: Ask the reference to mail a hardcopy of the verification form to:

Office of Certification Strategies
SIU School of Medicine, Behavioral Health Workforce Center
319 E. Madison, 4M
PO Box 19673

Springfield, IL 62702

Option 2: A link to the Experience Verification Form link is available on the SIU School of Medicine doula website. Your reference can access the link and complete the form online.

Special note: During the initial application period of the new Medicaid-Certified Doula Program, within the Legacy Pathway, a minimum of three Experience Verification Form completed by a client or health care professional will be required. The applicant will be able to self-report the remaining required experiences on the application.

Certification Requirements

Table 1, Certification Requirements

Training Program Pathway Requirements	Legacy Pathway Requirements
Prenatal, labor and delivery, postpartum training: A training verification form completed by a representative of a pre-approved doula training program OR A training verification form completed by a representative of a non-preapproved doula training program, plus a syllabus or topical outline to show the training topics **Birth experience:** Serve as a lead doula or shadow a lead doula for at least three (3) births over the past 12 months. Experience verification forms are submitted as evidence.	**Prenatal, labor and delivery, postpartum experience:** Support at least five (5) clients over the past three (3) years as a prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum doula. Experience verification forms must be submitted as evidence.
Common Requirements for Both Pathways*	
18 years of age Signed submission of the Illinois Doula Certification Program application form Current CPR or basic life support (BLS) documentation HIPAA compliance training documentation Cultural competency/Implicit bias training documentation Trauma-informed care training documentation Anatomy and physiology related to pregnancy, labor, and birth documentation	

Temporary Provision for Early Applicants

During the initial application period of the new Medicaid-Certified Doula Program, a minimum of one Experience Verification Form (for Training Program Pathway) and three Experience Verification Forms (for Legacy Pathway) must be completed by a client or health care professional. The applicant will be able to self-report the remaining required experiences on the application form.

Likewise, applicants following the Training Program Pathway are expected to send the Training Verification Form to their training organization for completion. However, if an applicant discovers it may be difficult for their training organization to complete the Training Verification Form in a timely manner, the applicant may submit their training certificate as evidence of completion.

*Several doula training programs include some or all of these training requirements as part of their curriculum. The SIU School of Medicine's doula certification website lists suggested resources for meeting these requirements.

Application Checklist

1. Have you identified references to complete the **Experience Verification Forms**?

    ☐ Certification Pathway: Serve as a lead doula or shadow a lead doula at least three (3) births over the past 12 months.

    OR

    ☐ Legacy Pathway: Support at least five (5) clients over the past three (3) years as a prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum doula.

    Reminder: A minimum of one Experience Verification Form completed by a client or health care professional will be required. You will be able to self-report the remaining required experiences on the application form.

2. Do you have documentation which can be submitted with your application showing completion of **common training requirements***?

    ☐ Current CPR or Basic Life Support Training documentation
    ☐ HIPAA compliance training documentation

☐ Cultural competency/Implicit bias training documentation

☐ Trauma-informed care documentation

☐ Anatomy and physiology related to pregnancy and birth documentation

*Several of the approved training organizations include some or all of these training requirements as part of their curriculum. Additionally, suggested training sites and organizations are provided on the SIU School of Medicine's doula certification website.

3. If you are following the Training Program Pathway, have you sent the **Training Verification Form** to your training organization? If your training organization is not pre-approved, do you have a syllabus or topical outline, as well?

   Reminder: If you discover it may be difficult for their training organization to complete the Training Verification Form in a timely manner, you may submit your training certificate (signed and dated) as evidence of completion.

4. Is your **application form** completed in full and signed?

   Option 1: Mail a hardcopy of the application, which can be downloaded from the SIU School of Medicine's doula certification website, to:

   Office of Certification Strategies
   SIU School of Medicine, Behavioral Health Workforce Center
   319 E. Madison, 4M
   PO Box 19673
   Springfield, IL 62702

   Option 2: Complete the online application.

Recertification

Information regarding the Illinois Medicaid-Certified Doula Program recertification requirements and process will be shared on the SIU School of Medicine's doula certification website.