
Informed Consent Agreement for Doula Services

Welcome to Maine Family Natural Health! The following agreement provides you with information about my training, practice philosophy, services, responsibilities as your midwife, and your responsibilities as the client. Please read this information carefully, ask any questions, and sign the agreement. This form will be kept in your chart; a copy is available to you upon request. Thank you!

My Training and Experience

I started Maine Family Natural Health in 2006, after completing my Naturopathic Doctorate (ND) and midwifery studies at the National College of Naturopathic Medicine in Portland, Oregon. I finished my midwifery apprenticeship in 2008 with the help and support of Licensed Midwives, Certified Professional Midwives, and Naturopathic Doctors in Oregon and Maine. I completed my Certificate of Professional Midwifery in 2015 after 6 years of primary midwifery. I am a member of Maine Association of Naturopathic Doctors (MAND) and Midwives of Maine (MOM). I keep current certification in CPR and Neonatal Resuscitation. In addition to practicing Naturopathic Medicine and Home Birth Midwifery, I was a faculty member at Birthwise Midwifery School in Bridgton, Maine for 5 years. I live and work in North Vassalboro, my hometown, with my husband, Tory, and our children Sovie, Noah, Finn, and Evan. We have a small farm of gardens and pets.

My Philosophy of Midwifery Care

I believe in a woman's ability to give birth. I believe that pregnancy, labor, and childbirth are normal, healthy functions of a woman's body, and an important part of her life. Birth is a transformative process that is empowering, intense, and intimate. I trust that a woman's body is wise and has the ability to birth her baby without intervention. While I understand and appreciate the availability of modern obstetrical technology when needed, I feel that the inappropriate overuse of this technology and protocols may interfere with a woman's natural ability to give birth in a safe way. Research supports my belief that in-hospital birth, attended by trained midwives, and/or with labor support of a doula as an advocate, is the safest way to give birth in a hospital. My responsibility as the doula in-hospital includes providing information about issues, conditions, and concerns that may arise during the childbearing year, so that a woman and her birth partner may make informed choices about care. I ask that you actively participate in promoting health, becoming informed, and making decisions about your care.

Benefits of Doula Services

Birth has some risks, no matter where it takes place. Countries with the lowest infant and maternal morbidity and mortality rates have one common theme: midwives in attendance at the birth. The United States has the highest cesarean section rate and highest infant and maternal mortality rates of any of the high-income, developed nations. Increased access to technology does not guarantee perfect outcomes in childbirth, and may actually contribute to poor outcomes because of overuse.

The benefits of doula services are centered on the principle that when a woman is in a comfortable environment, surrounded by people she trusts, she will feel safer and birth normally. She has greater control over how she labors and births, and she is able to act intuitively and trust her body. Birthing with a doula offers flexibility, advocacy, and increased chance of having a natural, vaginal delivery. Each family chooses the setting and attendants that they feel will most effectively support their process, in a way that reaffirms their values, beliefs, and sense of well-being.

Services Available to You

Prenatal Care:

- Free Consult visit
- Monitoring of weight, blood pressure, pulse, fetal heart rate, uterine growth, and position of the baby.
- Nutritional and lifestyle counseling
- Birth education
- Documentation of all interactions
- 24 hour on-call availability after 37 weeks

Birth:

- Labor support
- In-hospital advocacy
- Maternal support during the of birth of the baby and placenta
- Post-partum at-home support

Postpartum Care:

- Home visits 3 or more days following the birth
- Breastfeeding counseling
- Contraceptive and Birth Control counseling and management, as desired

Services I Do Not Provide:

- Chemical pain relief
- IV antibiotics
- Pitocin induction or augmentation
- Cesarean Section
- Forcep or Vacuum Extractor assisted delivery
- Pregnancy Termination

Responsibilities of the Doula:

- I will treat all clients with care and respect, and keep all information concerning that care confidential.
- I will be available to clients for phone consultation at home at any time, and after 37 weeks gestation can be reached 24 hours a day by phone. In the case of my serious illness, family emergency, or attendance with another laboring woman, access to another doula will be provided to ensure complete coverage.
- I and my assistants will maintain current certification in Neonatal Resuscitation and infant, child, and adult CPR.

Responsibilities of the Client:

- You must be strongly committed to and responsible for your own health and the health of your baby. This is best achieved by maintaining a healthy lifestyle, including good nutrition and regular exercise. It is important that you have confidence in your intuition, and your body's ability to safely grow and birth your baby.
- Honesty and trust in each other is very important. I expect that we will reach an easy rapport during the prenatal time that will enable us to work together for a positive experience. Open and honest communication is essential, as my understanding of your needs and wishes are fundamental to the job of facilitating your journey through childbirth. If difficulty arises, please inform me so that we can work toward a solution.
- Self education is an important part of birth. I suggest attendance at a childbirth preparation class for first-time parents. I offer the loan of many books, videos, and handouts for your use.
- **Payment for doula services is expected in full by 37 weeks of pregnancy. The total cost of doula services is \$2000. A down-payment of \$500 is expected at our first appointment. Your total payment due date (37 weeks): _____.**
- Please understand that I do not carry malpractice insurance, as there is none available to midwives in the state of Maine. I do my very best to provide you with safe, quality standards of care. If issues arise, please feel free to discuss them with me, or to address concerns to the Complaint Resolution Board of the Midwives of Maine.

I, the client, have read the above information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand and agree with Maine Family Natural Health's approach to doula care as described above. I desire to labor and give birth in a hospital or birth clinic and choose the doula, Dr. Morgan Titus Rau, to provide care during the pregnancy, birth, and post-partum time. I understand and accept the benefits and risks of having my baby in-hospital or at a birth clinic with a doula in attendance.

Mother's Signature

Date

Father/Partner's Signature

Date

Doula's Signature

Date