

# *Heritage Doula Hiring Agreement*

*Erin Winegar~Certified Birth Doula*

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**About your doula:** As a doula service provider, I help women stay strong and calm during birth. I will offer comfort measures, coping techniques, and constant presence to help you create a satisfying birth experience. I want to get to know you and your birth companion(s) prenatally, and will continuously support you and your loved ones during the birth. I will work to provide comfort and perspective to you and your partner, make suggestions as issues arise, and assist with massaging, positioning and relaxation techniques as needed. As your doula, I work for you directly, not for your caregiver or hospital.

My goal as your doula is to be completely present for your birth experience-physically, emotionally and energetically. Through using active listening techniques, I will adjust my role according to your needs and seek to promote communication among all members of your birthing team.

**Before labor:** After our initial meeting, I will meet with you and your birth companion(s) for 1 or 2 pre-birth visits. This gives us a chance to get to know each other before the birth. During the prenatal visit, we will discuss your priorities for the birth as well as any concerns or hopes you may have. During our visits we will discuss where you will birth the baby, when to call me, how to work successfully with care providers, 1<sup>st</sup> stage of labor (early labor, active labor and transition), 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of labor (pushing), 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of labor (cord clamping/cutting, bonding time with your little miracle, washing or not washing the baby, placenta), pain management, birth plan and being prepared for life at home with a new born.

**When you are in labor:** Please call me when you think you are in labor, even if you do not need support at that time. If I am unable to pick up the phone, please leave a message or text and I will call you back shortly. I will decide with you if I should come then or wait for further change. In the case of a long early labor, or an induction, I can check in periodically and come when you are moving into active labor. I need approximately 60 minutes to get to you from the time you ask me to come. We will also decide together where to meet-at your home or the hospital. Except for extraordinary circumstances, I will remain with you throughout labor and birth. In the rare circumstance that I can not attend your birth, I

will call a back-up doula to attend. If you go into labor before 37 weeks I will make the best effort to join you as soon as possible, or make back-up arrangements as necessary.

During labor, I offer a variety of comfort measures, including massage, counter pressure, guided visualization, positions and movement, breathing techniques, hot and cold packs, focus points, verbal encouragement, and other logistical support. I bring my knowledge of the stages of labor and can offer reassurance and suggestions as labor progresses. Depending on our conversations during pre-birth visits, I can either be your primary labor support or assist your partner in supporting you. I believe that women can successfully cope with labor in a variety of ways, and my goal is to support you in finding the method that works for you in each moment.

**After birth:** I usually remain with you for one to two hours, unless you are comfortable and your family is ready for private time together. I can also assist you with breastfeeding, if necessary. I am available for phone contact to answer any questions you may have. I would like to meet one last time within one to two weeks following your birth to see how you are doing, to review the birth, to admire your baby and to get feedback from you about my role.

**Doula limitations:** I DO NOT perform medical tasks such as heart tones, blood pressure, cervical assessments, or deliver your baby. I DO NOT make decisions for you. I will help you get the information necessary to make an informed decision. I will also remind you if there is a departure from your birth plan. My role is to observe, listen and reiterate rather than to give opinions. I DO NOT speak to the staff on your behalf. I will discuss your concerns with you and suggest options, but you or your loved ones will speak directly to the clinical staff. I am there to encourage communication with your provider.

**Explanation of Fees:** My fee for these services as described is \$550.00. A non-refundable fee/retaining fee of \$200.00 is due when you select me as your birth doula. The balance of \$350.00 is due before baby is born.

I will make every effort to provide the services described here. If I show symptoms of a contagious illness, I will call on a back-up doula to attend your birth. If the back-up doula attends your birth for this or any other reason, my fee is due in full so that I may pay the back-up doula.

Cesarean Section is not a surgery that we anticipate happening at the time of hire. In the event you have a cesarean section, planned or emergency, all fees remain the same. I will stay and offer as much support as the medical staff will allow. It is up to you to secure my place in the operating room. If

scheduled, I will meet you at the hospital at your scheduled time. I will accompany you in the operating room if allowed by medical staff, and offer emotional support and breastfeeding support after the birth. If for some reason I am not allowed to be present in the operating room (emergency, policy, ect.), I will join you after the birth in the recovery area or in your postpartum room to provide emotional and breastfeeding support after the birth.

If I or a back-up doula are unable to attend your birth, and this is due to my error, there will be no further charge for my lack service. Any fees already paid will be refunded/returned.

I will make every effort to provide the services described in this agreement, however, sometimes this is impossible (ie, a rapid labor and birth, natural disaster, dangerous driving conditions). If failure to attend your birth is beyond anyone's control, our agreement stands as is.

If I am not called for the birth, the fees will not be refunded, as I may have turned away other clients for your space to be reserved.

If client chooses to cancel service before 37 weeks, all but the non-refundable/retaining fee will be returned. After 37 weeks, there is no refund for cancellation.

I/We have read and accept the terms of Heritage Doula's contract services, limitations and fees and agree it reflects the discussion we had with her.

Mother's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Husband/Partner's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Husband/Partner's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_