



**Leigh Steele, Birth Doula**

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## Birth Doula Contract

My services are customized to the special requests and needs of the birthing mom and her support team. Standard services include emotional support, physical comfort measures, and advocacy. I was trained through a DONA-certified birth doula course and Nurturing Hearts Birth Services. I served four years as Vice President of the Arizona Birth Network and have had the great honor of attending over 150 births. Birth is my Life's Work!

**Emotional Support** includes listening to a woman's unique needs both before and during the birth of her baby and acting according to those needs. Emotional support consists of working together to create a safe, comfortable environment in which a woman can birth with confidence and peace.

**Comfort Measures** can include: labor positions, massage, counter-pressure, hydrotherapy, aromatherapy, relaxation and visualization techniques.

**Advocacy** includes supporting a women in her decisions by providing various resources of birth services and by and facilitating her birth plan.

### **My Services Include:**

- an initial interview
- a minimum of two prenatal visits
- guidance on relaxation techniques
- ongoing 24-hour telephone support
- a comprehensive educational and resource packet
- birth planning and preparation
- labor support in your home or hospital
- lactation support
- a postpartum visit
- inclusion in private two-hour childbirth prep class in the comfort of your home

### **Rates:**

- I offer my doula services at a rate of \$1800. \$900 is due as a retainer fee when you select me as your doula. The remaining \$900 is due within one week after the birth. *Payment plans are available.*

## **Letter of Agreement Describing Labor Support Services, Limits, and Fees**

### **What is my role as a doula?**

I accompany women and their partners in labor to help support and advocate for you during your beautiful birth experience. I draw on my knowledge and experience to provide physical, emotional, and informational support to women and partners. I am independent and self-employed. As your doula, I am working for you, not for your caregiver or the hospital although I pride myself on the positive relationships I have built with members of the birthing community.

### **Choosing a Doula.**

It is very important that you and your partner are comfortable with me and with my role in the birth. Thus, I will meet with clients at least once before labor to become acquainted, to explore and discuss your priorities and any fears or concerns, and to plan how we might best work together. If at this meeting, you or your partner decide that we aren't the "right match", I encourage you to say so and I will happily refer you to a different doula with whom you may develop a better rapport.

If you do decide to work with me (lucky me!), we will then do a prenatal meeting (see below). This may be part of the "getting acquainted" meeting, or may be scheduled at a separate time.

### **My availability.**

From the moment we agree that we will work together, I consider myself "on-call" to provide support for you and your partner. I will notify you of any times when I am not available and will provide the name and contact information for my wonderful and professional back-up doula, **Jessamyn Turgeson @ phone number 480.292.8306**

### **Prenatal Meeting(s)**

We will have a prenatal meetings to review your Birth Plan, and give us a chance to talk in detail about your preferences regarding your birth. I will ask about your knowledge of the birth process, and can provide information and education as needed. I will invite you to share your own personal ways of coping with pain and fatigue and difficult situations, and what internal resources we can draw upon to assist you with the birthing experience. I will invite you to share how you and your partner foresee working together, and the roles of others who may be attending the birth. We can discuss together what fears and concerns you have regarding the birth. We can review your preferences regarding the use of pain medications.

My role is to help you have a satisfying birth as you define it. The more we explore this in advance, the better I will be able to fulfill this role.

### **When you are in Labor.**

When you think labor has begun, call me and let me know so I can begin making arrangements for attending the birth.

It is up to you to decide at what point in your labor you want me there. We will discuss in prenatal meetings what you expect to want during labor, and will also evaluate by phone once your labor has begun, and you know more what your needs will be.

I can offer help and advice with comfort measures such as breathing, relaxation, movement, positioning, and massage. I can assist with gathering information about the progress of labor to make sure you have the information you need to make informed decisions about your birth. I can also serve as an advocate for

your needs with the birth team/staff. My most critical role is providing continuous emotional reassurance and comfort.

### **After Birth/Postpartum.**

I expect to remain with a client for 1-2 hours after birth, until you are comfortable, and the family is ready for quiet time together. I can help with initial breastfeeding, if desired.

I am available for phone contact to answer questions about the birth of your baby. My services include one postpartum visit, usually within two weeks of the birth. During this visit, I can provide breastfeeding support, baby care tips, referrals to community resources, and a chance to discuss the birth experience. If you are in need of further support, additional visits are always an option.

### **As a doula...**

- I do not perform clinical tasks, such as blood pressure, fetal heart checks, vaginal exams, etc. I am there to provide only physical and emotional support and advocacy.
- I do not make decisions for you. I will help you get the information you need to make your own informed decisions. I will also remind you if there is a departure from your Birth Plan, and will verify if this is, in fact, your informed decision.
- I will not speak to medical staff regarding matters where health care decisions are being made. I can discuss your concerns with you and suggest options. I can support you in discussions with staff as your advocate, making sure you have the opportunity to discuss concerns, but you or your partner will speak on your behalf to the birth team/medical staff.

### **Failure of a doula to provide service.**

I will make every effort to provide the services described here. Very rarely, this is impossible for a variety of reasons. Know that I have a professional back up doula and that if I am unable to attend your birth because I am supporting another client in labor at that time, I will arrange for my back up doula to contact you and support you in your birth experience. If my failure to attend the birth is due to my error, there will be no charge for my services, and I will refund your deposit. If it is due to circumstances beyond anyone's control (e.g. an extremely rapid labor and birth), or your failure to call me, I will keep the deposit, but there will be no further charge.

Doula's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I / We have read this letter describing the doula services and agree that it reflects the discussion we have had with her. I do not hold my doula responsible for unexpected clinical outcomes.

Client's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_