Calming Touch
Doula Services

Contract for Birth Doula Services

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toLabor, Certified Doula

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What I Do

As a doula, I accompany women in labor to help ensure a safe and satisfying birth experience. I am extremely passionate about childbirth and trusting in the woman's body. I believe that birth is sacred, and should be treated with love, respect and knowledge. I encourage women to be strong, birth with inner wisdom and intuition. I draw on my knowledge and growing experience as a doula and mother to provide emotional support, physical comfort, pain management, and as needed, communication with other caregivers to make sure that you have the information you need to make informed decisions as they rise in labor. I can provide reassurance and perspective to you and your partner (if present), make suggestions for labor progress, and help with relaxation, massage, positioning, counter pressure, and other techniques for comfort. I am independent and self-employed. As your doula, I am working for YOU, not your caregiver or hospital.

Qualifications

I have been trained and certified through toLabor (The Organization of Labor Assistants for Birth Options & Resources). I received certification in May 2013 and recertified in April 2019.

Working Together

Our relationship typically begins with a no-obligation face-to-face or phone interview. This is when I will explain my services, address any questions or concerns you have pertaining to the doula's role, and get to know a bit about you and your ideal birth/previous birth(s). If we decide we could be a good team, we will then set up a prenatal meeting. It is ideal for all members of your birth team to attend this initial meeting. While I realize that this may not be possible, it helps to ensure that we are all a good fit. After we have committed to working together, and I have received a signed contract, we will keep in touch primarily through phone and E-mail.

During your prenatal period, I will assist in writing a birth plan, if desired, or become familiar with your birth plan. I also want to know how you typically cope with pain and fatigue, and how you and your partner(s) foresee working together. I am open to further meeting to build our relationship, especially if we meet early in your pregnancy. I have a growing list of resources and may offer suggestions and materials that you may find useful. At the minimum, checking in after each caregiver appointment is a must, as well as further opportunities for us to establish a comfortable rapport. I will also inform you of times when I am unavailable for labor support (if they occur). To cover those times, I will arrange one or more back-up doulas whom, time and circumstance permitting, you may also meet.

I prefer that you call me when you ***think*** you are in labor. Even if you feel that you do not yet need me, I can answer any questions and make suggestions over the phone. It also gives us a chance to decide if I should come right then if you choose to labor at home, wait for further change, or meet you at your birth place. ***I <u>may</u> need 1-2 hours to get to you from the time you ask me to come.*** With the exception of extraordinary circumstances, I or my back-up will remain with you throughout your labor and birth. After the birth, I usually remain with you for 30 minutes to 1 hour. I try to preserve the first few hours with your new baby as quiet time for you to bond and get to know your new family member. I will always ask before I leave, and try to stay as long as you need. I can also help with initial breastfeeding questions, concerns, and positions.

I will continue to be available for phone and E-mail contact to answer questions about your birth or your baby. I will contact you by text, phone call, or E-mail within 1 week after birth. At that time, we can set up an in-home postpartum visit for 2-3 weeks after the date of birth, or whenever is most convenient for you and your family. At this visit, we will address any concerns you may have about adjustment, review your birth, and admire your baby. I will also plan to bring you a meal of your choice to the postpartum visit. My main role in this period is to LISTEN to you. Women usually need to just TALK about their birth experience. Finally, I will get written feedback from you about my role, in order to assist with my certification requirements.

<u>Services I Do Not Provide</u>

- As a doula, I will not perform clinical tasks, such as blood pressure, fetal heart checks, vaginal exams, or administer IVs.
- As a doula, I will 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.
- As a doula, I will not speak to the staff instead of you. If there are decisions that need to be made, I will discuss your concerns with you and suggest options, but you or your partner will speak on your own behalf to the clinical staff.
- In the event of a rapid labor or emergency situation, I will call 911. In the event of an emergency delivery, I will do what measures I am capable of to try to keep you and the baby safe and comfortable until EMS arrives. This will fall under the Good Samaritan Law.

Failure to Provide Services

I will make every effort to provide the service described here. Sometimes this is impossible (for example, with rapid labor or if I am supporting another client). If I, or my back-up, fail to make it to your birth due to our error, you will be refunded $400, however, the retainer fee of $200 will not be refunded. If it is due to your failure to call me, no payment will be refunded.

***Scheduled Cesarean Clause**

Occasionally a woman will have something arise during her pregnancy that necessitates a scheduled Cesarean birth. If this decision is made, you may choose to cancel my services without payment refunded. Alternatively, you may choose to have me come with you to the hospital, accompany you during birth or wait in the recovery room, and assist you with breastfeeding and adjustments in the first hours after your birth. Doulas are an asset during all types of birth and I would love to support you.

Fees:

$200 Retainer Fee – Due when contract is signed, via check, cash or PayPal. This fee is to hold my spot as your doula during your birth month.

$400 On-Call Fee – Due no later than 34 weeks gestation, via check, cash or PayPal. This fee is to cover my on-call time for you, as well as the time I will be spending with you during labor/delivery/postpartum.

Fees Include:

- One or two prenatal meetings to discuss your pregnancy, birth plans, and any concerns you or your partner may have;
- Help creating a birth plan, if needed;
- Phone and E-mail support from date of hire through the postpartum visit;
- Community referrals and resources, if needed, to assist you in pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, newborn care, and possibly other community resources;
- Continuous labor support in your home, hospital, birth center or a combination of these places;
- Immediate postpartum support for 30 minutes-1 hour following birth, including assistance with breast feeding;
- In-home postpartum visit 2-3 weeks after the birth to discuss the birth, welcome the baby and address concerns you may have.

*If you so choose, you may have access to my lending library of birth, breastfeeding, and parenting-related books. I can order a book for you if I do not yet have it. All materials are to be returned at the postpartum visit. It is my commitment to provide services to any family in need of them. I am willing to discuss an alternative financial agreement if the one outlined above is not feasible for you.

I/We have read this contract describing Anne Shell's services as my/our birth doula and my/our responsibilities as client(s). I/We agree that it reflects the discussions that I/we have had with her. All questions have been answered to my/our satisfaction. I/We agree to the terms and limitations of services and payment of fees outlined above; if alternative payment plan has been agreed upon, alternative payment schedule and agreement is written below.

_____
Print Client's Name

_____ _____
Client's Signature Date

_____
Print Partner's Name

_____ _____
Partner's Signature Date

_____ _____
Doula's Signature Date

My EDD is: *My on-call date:

*Alternative Payment Plan (detailed):