

Dear **[Enter Provider or Hospital Contact Here]**,

I am writing to urge you to consider changing your Labor and Delivery policy to encourage the presence of a doula or other perinatal healthcare worker to provide continuous in-person professional labor support, in addition to a laboring individual's primary support person.

I'm now [#] weeks pregnant and looking forward to coming to **[Hospital Name]** to give birth to my **[number of children]** child in the coming weeks. I chose **[Hospital Name]** specifically because **[explain your specific reason(s) for choosing to give birth at this hospital]**.

I am troubled by **[Hospital Name]**'s policy limiting doulas' access to provide continuous in-person labor support at my birth. **[Include some notes about why you hired a doula. If you've used a doula or professional labor support during a previous birth, include your experience here or reference this article [here](#).]** Research continually shows continuous in-person labor support by a professional doula or perinatal healthcare worker is essential to the labor and birth process.

[AWONN](#), [DONA International](#), [ACNM](#), [VA ACNM](#), and the [DC ACNM](#) all released statements in favor of doulas as essential workers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Each of these statements repeatedly point to the overwhelming evidence that doulas play an essential role in a collaborative healthcare model, and provide physical, mental, and emotional support that complements the medical care provided by doctors and nurses in the hospital setting. Especially during a global pandemic, when the need for emotional and physical support is at an all-time high, doulas are critical to supporting birthing families and promoting a collaborative, patient-directed birthing experience.

Based on this research, several states already consider doulas essential healthcare workers. [New York](#), [New Jersey](#), [Michigan](#), [Washington](#), and Oregon, created statements and legislation stating doulas are permitted on Labor & Deliver and **are not counted as a primary support person**. In the Washington DC area, doulas are permitted in all hospitals within the INOVA Health System in Northern Virginia and in other area hospitals as well, and do not count as a primary support person or visitor.

Additionally, consistent with the research and the conclusion that doulas are essential, doulas in many states have been deemed eligible to receive the vaccine as part of the 1A rollout. As part of the early rollout, many doulas have received both doses to the vaccine. This, in combination with adequate personal protective equipment, demonstrates that doulas are following the same health and safety protocols as other healthcare professionals. Doulas continue to support efforts to mitigate disease transmission and promote health and safety among clients and healthcare providers.

I strongly urge the hospital staff and administration to consider professional doulas as essential, in addition to the 1 support person, for the benefit of birthing people and babies.

[Signature]