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Holistic Doula Services Contract

My Commitment To You

As a holistic healthcare professional and doula service provider, I assist women in staying present and connected to themselves during transformational process of pregnancy and birth in order to create a safe and satisfying experience. My desire is to support you in manifesting health and well-being before, throughout, and beyond the welcoming of your new family member to this world.

I am an independent practitioner and I work directly for you. This means that I will advocate for you in all regards if needed at a home birth, hospital or birth center. As your advocate, I seek to promote communication among all members of your birthing team however my primary job is to listen to you deeply and to hold and reiterate your intention throughout your birth process. And even though births don't always go as planned, my job is to continue to hold the container we have set no matter how things need to change in order for you and your baby to have a safe, satisfying, and healthy delivery.

My goal as your doula is to be completely present for your birth experience: physically, emotionally and energetically. In my philosophy, birth is an incredible and intimate rite of passage and I am delighted to walk this path with you.

In addition to being a doula service provider, I am a holistic healthcare professional and I can assist you in pregnancy-related concerns such as ensuring the position of the baby is conducive to a healthy delivery and any common issues that arise in the second or third trimester (such as carpal tunnel syndrome, numbness or tingling of limbs, swelling of the ankles, feet, and face, itching of the abdomen, palms and soles, insomnia, hemorrhoids, heartburn, shortness of breath or other not-so-fun changes your body might be making at this time). Specialized nutrition, herbs, and acupuncture can serve to support your body, mind, and spirit (as well as your partners!) to prepare for the welcoming of this little being with ease, safety, and comfort.

Prenatal Meetings

Getting Acquainted Visit (1 hour): I want to get to know you and your birth companion(s) prenatally so that I can continuously support you and your loved ones during the birth process. I would like to meet with you and your birth companion(s) for a minimum of one prenatal visit, possibly two visits if this is your first birth and/or if this is our first time meeting each other. During this time, we will have the chance to get to know each other and for you to share with me your priorities, concerns, and any hopes you may have for your birth process. This first visit is optional if you are a client in my private practice or if we have met before under other circumstances and we have already agreed to working together.

Primary Prenatal Visit (2 hours): This time together shall be scheduled at or around your 7th month of pregnancy. During our meeting, we will discuss the components of a birth plan and if

you have not already done so, I will assist you in creating the birth plan you *most desire* and an alternate birth plan in case things move differently than we plan. We will also discuss the roles of each person attending the birth and any specific tasks related to these roles so that I can help you uphold your intention and each person's role throughout the entire experience. I want to know how we can best work together to create a positive birth experience and I am more than happy to answer questions for you about the process of birth at this time.

Labor and Delivery

On-Call: I will become available to you 24/7 beginning two weeks prior to your scheduled due date and for two weeks after. During this time, I ask that you notify me the moment you enter labor so that I can begin holding active, energetic space for you in your process. This helps me to drop in and prepare for becoming fully present and available to you for an unknown amount of time during your labor and delivery. We will continue to stay in touch until the time comes that you would like for me to be with you. Please allow the maximum of one hour from the time you call until my arrival. *I will remain with you around the clock during from this point forward.*

In the case of a long early labor, or an induction, I will check in periodically and come when you are moving into active labor or feel you would like extra support. In the case of going past your due date, acupuncture, acupressure, massage, and visualization techniques are known to be helpful in getting your body and baby moving and I am happy to offer these services if needed.

Except for extraordinary circumstances, I plan to 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 (to be decided at our prenatal meeting). 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 will work to provide comfort and perspective to you and your partner and make suggestions if issues arise. I offer a variety of supportive measures including acupressure, acupuncture (depending on the facility you choose, acupuncture may or may not be allowed on the premises), massage, counter pressure, guided visualization, positions and movement, breathing techniques, hot and cold packs, focus points, verbal encouragement, essential oils, flower essences, and other logistical support. I bring my knowledge of the stages of labor and can offer reassurance and suggestions as labor progresses. 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.

Postpartum

Post-delivery Care: I will remain with you for 1-3 hours after the birth, until you are comfortable and ready for quiet time with loved ones. My desire is to help you create the environment you want for those first few critical hours of bonding with your new family.

Postpartum Visit (1 hour): I will schedule your postpartum visit in the week or two following your birth to see how you and your family are adjusting, assist with any breastfeeding issues, and listen to your birth story. We can look at photos together and give feedback or mirroring at this time. Taking the time to process joyful or difficult moments from the birth with your birth team and your doula can influence how you remember your baby's birthday for years to come.

Please note that as an LAc and doula, I do not:

- Perform most clinical tasks such as fetal heart monitoring and vaginal exams.
- 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.
- 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 care provider.

Though the birth process is a common experience, this birth will be YOUR experience and it will be unique regardless of how much planning and preparation you and your birth companions engage in. Mothers-to-be who choose not to read about the process of birth or attend classes are always welcome to do so in my opinion as birth is a natural event, not a medical one.

That being said, statistics show that having *some* knowledge of what to expect leads to less stress and more relaxation in the birth process. There are some wonderful materials available that could provide some scaffolding to your understanding of birth that may enrich your experience and guide you in creating the experience you most desire. These materials are: *Birthing from Within* by Pam England and Rob Horowitz, *Childbirth Wisdoms: From the world's oldest societies* by Judith Goldsmith and *Guide to Childbirth* by Ina May (in fact any books by her are recommended!).

Holistic Doula Service Fee: \$800

This fee includes:

- 1-4 hours in prenatal meetings
- 24/7 availability two weeks prior to and after your scheduled due date
- unlimited presence during active labor and birth
- 1-3 hours immediate postpartum care
- 1 hour postpartum home visit 1-2 weeks after your delivery
- 10% Donation to the Refugee Birth Clinic in Mae Sot, Thailand

* Please inquire if sliding scale or payment plan is needed.

Agreement

We agree to the description of services and fee details outlined in this agreement and would like to hire Mindi K. Counts to attend our birth and provide support throughout our pregnancy and birth. Please sign below as having read, understood, and agreed to the above policies.

Client Name (Print & Signature)

Date

Partner Name (Print & Signature)

Date

