



International Center for Traditional Childbearing (ICTC)

ICTC Doula Scope of Practice

The ICTC International's Standard of Practice defines a **doula role** as comprehensive, culturally sensitive and pro-active; providing service from conception to six-months postpartum. This includes support during pregnancy, labor, and birth, as well as assistance during the transition to parenthood in the initial postpartum period, and home visits. The ICTC doula focuses on emotional and social support, advocacy and referrals for the childbearing woman and her family.

The ICTC Standard of Practice defines a **doula's role** as essential in empowering women and their significant other and in the visualization and planning of their birth experience. The ICTC Full Circle Doula®, provides perinatal services that embrace diverse traditions.

The ICTC Full Circle Doula® is trained to improve birth outcomes, provide emotional support, nurture the pregnant woman and to build confidence in the normalcy of birth with robust breastfeeding duration and loving parenting.

I. Scope of Practice

A. Services Rendered

The ICTC Full Circle Doula® cares and nurtures the woman from conception to six-months postpartum and sometimes longer. Prenatally the Full Circle Doula® aids the mother throughout the pregnancy, with emotional support, nutritional support, relief from normal pregnancy discomforts, consultation for birth plan intentions, breast feeding preparation, labor and birth support using evidence-based research as the foundation for care and through making home visits.

During the postpartum period, the Full Circle Doula® provides after birth care, newborn care, breastfeeding support, postpartum care and full postpartum services. The doula provides non-medical support, companionship, assists with parenting and sibling adjustment, meal preparation and household organization, and family celebration.

The doula offers evidence-based information on infant feeding, emotional and physical recovery from childbirth and other issues related to the postpartum period, and can make referrals if necessary. The Full Circle Doula® provide support to the family to the best of her ability.

B. Limits to Practice

The ICTC Standards and Certification apply to emotional, physical and educational support including blood pressure readings as a public health prevention service. However, clinical skills do not extend beyond blood pressure reading as a public health service and is only offered to those clients who request it. The doula gives the systolic and diastolic numbers, without interpretation. The client must then call her numbers into her health care provider.

The ICTC Doula provides culturally competent and comprehensive care that allows the mother and father to feel value in their experience and satisfaction in the pregnancy and postpartum experience.

C. Referrals and Advocacy

For client needs beyond the scope of the doula's training, referrals are made to appropriate resources of their choice. The Doula will advocate on the clients behalf when appropriate and via the clients request to ensure a safe and quality perinatal experience.

II. Doula Responsibility and Professionalism

Doula accountability and dependability is paramount for the client. If an unforeseen circumstance is to arise, the obligation of the Doula is to remain reliable, to the best of the doula's ability, for the term of the agreement. Should any doula feel a need to discontinue service to an established client, it is the doula's responsibility to notify the client in writing and arrange for a replacement, if the client so desires. This may be satisfied by:

- Referring the client to another doula colleague.
- Suggest using another member of the ICTC as an appropriated option for quality care and a continuation of Full Circle Doula care.
- Contacting the ICTC National Headquarters for names of other doulas in the area.
- Going to the ICTC web-site under find a doula for referrals.
- Following up with the client to make sure her needs are being fulfilled

III. TRAINING & EXPERIENCE

A. Training

The ICTC Full Circle Doula®, who is certified by the ICTC, will have completed all the requirements as set forth in the ICTC Standard Requirements for Full Circle Doula® Certification.

B. Experience

The ICTC Full Circle Doula® certified by the ICTC will have the experience as set forth in the ICTC Requirements for Full Circle Certification. This includes infant care experience, breastfeeding education, attendance of childbirth preparation classes, specific ICTC approved training courses, CPR certification and a food handler's card, applicable reading materials, and evaluations from both new mothers and their supporting partners.

C. Maintenance of Certification

The ICTC certified Full Circle Doula® will maintain certified as outlined in the ICTC recertification packet. Recertification must be completed every three years, with a total of 24 continuing education credits (CEU's), from the ICTC approved list.

D. Proof of Certification

ICTC Full Circle Doulas® are to keep their ICTC Certification on their person in hospital settings, birth center settings and at home births.