

## **Letter of Agreement**

Summit Doula Care

www.summitdoulacare.com

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### **As a Doula:**

I accompany women in labor to help ensure a safe and satisfying birth experience. I have begun the training approved by DONA International and I am building my base of experience. I draw upon my professional training, knowledge and experience to provide emotional support, physical comfort and communication with your health care provider to ensure that you have the information needed to make informed decisions as they arise in labor. I can provide reassurance and perspective to you and your partner, make suggestions to help labor progress, and offer comfort measures. These include massage, relaxation and visualization techniques, suggestions for positions including the birth ball, hot and cold packs, help with backache and back labor pain, music, acupressure and other client specific needs. I am independent and self-employed. As your doula, I am working for you, not your caregiver or hospital.

### **As a Doula, I Do Not:**

1. Perform clinical tasks, such as blood pressure checks, fetal assessments, vaginal exams, or delivery. I am there to provide only physical comfort and emotional support.
2. Make decisions for you or speak 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.
3. Speak to the staff on your behalf. I will discuss your concerns with you and suggest options, but you or your partner will speak directly to the clinical staff regarding your care.

### **Before Labor:**

I will meet with you and your partner for a no-obligation initial interview. This time will give you the opportunity to decide if I will be a good fit as your birth doula. We will explore and discuss your priorities and any fears or concerns, discuss your birth plan, and determine how we might best work together. I will also inform you of times when I am unavailable for labor support, although I will do my best to ensure my availability for your labor and birth. To cover those times, I will arrange for a qualified back-up doula whom you may also meet. This initial meeting does not obligate you to use my services.

If you decide to move forward with me as your doula, we will schedule approximately two additional prenatal meetings to further prepare for your labor. We will certainly remain in touch by phone and/or email.

In our prenatal meetings, I will want to become familiar with your plans for labor, birth and postpartum. If you need guidance in defining your labor plan, I can draw on my education and training to provide resources to help you decide the terms of your plan. My goal is to support you in achieving your ideal birth experience, however you define it. The more we explore this in advance, the better I will be able to fulfill this role. I will want to know how you tend to cope with pain and fatigue and how you and your partner foresee working together. I hope to educate you regarding the stages of labor and your natural coping methods as a means of replacing fear with knowledge.

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### **Late Pregnancy:**

I prefer to attend at least one prenatal visit with you during your last few weeks in order to meet your doctor and introduce myself as your doula. This is not required, but it is an option. I am available for phone consultations and e-mail questions in late pregnancy and encourage mothers to call with questions or updates. Once we enter the on-call period, I will stay in touch every few days.

### **During Labor:**

I prefer that you call me when you think you are in labor, even if you do not yet need me. I can answer questions and make suggestions over the phone. We will decide if I should come right then or wait for further change. I usually need approximately one hour to get to you from the time you ask me to come. I will then plan to remain with you throughout your labor and birth, accompanying you to the hospital or birthing center, and continuing support until just after birth. Except for extraordinary circumstances, I will remain with you throughout labor and birth.

### **My On-Call Period:**

I consider my on-call period to be from two weeks before the due date and until the baby comes. If there are limits of my availability near your due date, I will let you know. During my on-call time, I will be staying within one hour of your birthplace and will stay in touch by phone, text, or email often.

I can generally be reached on my cell phone at any time. In the rare instance when I need to turn it off during an on-call period, I try to check voicemail and text messages at least every hour.

### **After the Birth:**

I want to be sensitive to the special bonding time that occurs immediately after birth, allowing the family some time alone. However, I will remain with you if you desire during the first two hours especially to assist you with breastfeeding. I'll offer to take several photos of the new family, which I'll email to you in the days after the birth. I am also available for phone contact to answer any questions you may have. I will typically provide two postpartum visits, the first usually at your birthplace and the second at your home within the first two weeks following the baby's birth. This is a good time to debrief, answer new parent questions, give help with breastfeeding and get feedback from you about my role.

### **My Fees:**

At this time I am working towards achieving my certification through DONA International. My standard fee is \$700.00 for a birth. However, during my certification period, my fees will be discounted to \$250. I ask for a 50% deposit, which is typically paid during or shortly after the initial prenatal conference. I will not consider myself obligated to the birth or on-call until I have received this deposit. The remainder of the fee is requested within two weeks after the birth or paid at the second postpartum visit. I firmly believe all mothers should have access to a doula's care regardless of ability to pay. If you are unable to afford my fees, I will work reasonably with you to come to an alternative agreement.

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### Failure to Provide Service:

I will make every effort to provide the services described above. However, sometimes this is impossible for a variety of reasons. If my failure to attend 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 (for example, an extremely rapid labor and delivery, or your failure to call me) I will keep the deposit, but there will be no further charges.

I/we have read this letter of agreement describing the doula's services and agree it reflects the discussion we had with her. I/we recognize that although Hannah Golen is a trained doula, in the unlikely and unfortunate event of a trauma at birth for either the baby or mother, I/we agree to hold harmless and otherwise indemnify Hannah Golen of any and all liability.

### Dispute Resolution:

We agree, in the unlikely event that a dispute should occur between us, that all disputes shall be resolved pursuant to Oregon law and that, except as otherwise indicated below, the parties to this agreement are not entitled to and shall not receive attorney's fees and/or expenses arising from any such dispute. We further agree to mediate any dispute arising out of this Agreement before resorting to arbitration or court action. Mediation fees, if any, shall be divided equally.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client's Partner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Doula, Hannah Golen

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date