



HEALTHY MOTHERS,
HEALTHY BABIES
Healthy mothers. Healthy babies. Coalition of Georgia

VIRTUAL DOULA

TOOLKIT

March 2020
COVID-19 Response

SUPPORTING FAMILIES
IN A VIRTUAL AGE

PURPOSE

This kit is meant to provide doulas with the tools needed to provide virtual doula services to clients. Given that the current public health recommendations suggest that we practice social distancing, and that hospitals are limiting the number of individuals who may be present at birth during this pandemic, virtual doula services are a way to provide support and guidance to families without jeopardizing health and safety. In these uncertain times, families still need support, guidance and access to information and techniques that will reduce stress and lead to healthy birth and postpartum outcomes. This toolkit was created for doulas serving families in Georgia, though many of these resources can be used by doulas across the country.

In This Toolkit

1. Available Platforms For Remote Communication
2. Questions to Ask Your Clients
3. Additional Resources for Your Clients
4. Sample Contract Offerings for Virtual Doulas

Current Guidelines Regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19)

You may access current guidelines on working safely and supporting families while maintaining good health here:

- [DONA International Statement on COVID-19 & Doulas](#)
- [DONA's Doula Toolkit on COVID-19 Response](#)
- [CDC Guidance on COVID-19](#)
- [ACOG Guidelines on COVID-19](#)
- [AAP Guidelines on COVID-19](#)

Above all else, take care of yourself.

Available Platforms for Remote Communication

Virtual Doulas will need to utilize a variety of mobile communication tools to work with their clients and provide support. While it is recommended that you are flexible and adaptable to the needs of your clients, it may also be beneficial to choose 2-3 platforms to offer your clients at the most that you are able to use consistently and work well on your mobile device.

This is not an exhaustive list, but includes some of the most widely used options for free video conferencing with families. Beyond texts and calls, here are some free methods for engaging with families by video and group chat.

Video Call Platforms

Platform	Phone App	Video	Cost
Skype	iOS + Android	Yes	Free to use on wifi - otherwise cellular data charges apply.
FaceTime	iOS only	Yes	Free to use on wifi - otherwise cellular data charges apply.
Google Handouts	iOS + Android	Yes	Free but both parties must have google accounts
WhatsApp	iOS + Android	Yes	Free to use on wifi - otherwise cellular data charges apply.
Zoom	iOS + Android	Yes	Free to use on wifi - otherwise cellular data charges apply.

Group Chats - Creating Support Groups

Platform	Phone App	Video	Cost
GroupMe	iOS + Android	Yes	Free to use on wifi - otherwise cellular data charges apply.
WhatsApp	iOS + Android	Yes	Free to use on wifi - otherwise cellular data charges apply.
Facebook Messenger	iOS + Android	Yes	Free to use on wifi - otherwise cellular data charges apply.

Questions for Your Clients

As you consider how best to serve your clients during these uncertain times, work with them to consider the following:

- How will I need to adapt my birth plan?
- Is my prenatal care provider offering virtual check-ins at this time?
- Will my selected Pediatrician be able to see my baby on schedule? Will they offer a telemedicine option for baby's check-up?
- If I am birthing at a hospital, how have their policies changed? How has my provider changed their policies or practice?
- As hospitals work to reduce transmission and risk, am I prepared to be sent home earlier than usual?
- If the hospital I am planning on delivering at is not ideal due to high instance of COVID-19 cases, how can I prepare to be adaptable and open to delivering at a safer hospital?
- Just in case the hospital is not an option, do I have a 'birth in place' plan?
- Will my obstetric provider be able to conduct my postpartum visit on schedule? Will they offer a telemedicine option if appropriate for my level of care?
- Do I have enough diapers, wipes, breastmilk bags, bottles, ice packs, food and other needed items to cover care for a month or more?
- What will I need in my postpartum period to feel connected to others when visitors may not be able to come over in person?



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Free Resources for Clients

Childbirth & Prenatal Education

[Pickles & Ice Cream Georgia - HMHBGA's Prenatal Course](#)

[Northside Hospital - Video Series on Maternal Care Issues](#)

[MothertoBaby - Medications & More During Pregnancy & Breastfeeding](#)

[Text4Baby - Text Messages for Mom & Baby - Pregnancy Through 1st Year](#)

Breastfeeding

[La Leche League Facebook Support Groups \(English / Spanish\)](#)

[Aeroflow Breastpumps - Choose & Order Insurance-Covered Breastpumps](#)

[Breastfeeding Basics Video Series from Breastfeeding Housecalls](#)

[ZipMilk - Find Breastfeeding Support Near You](#)

[Emory Decatur - Baby Talk Support Group - Now by Zoom](#)

Important Notice Regarding Pregnancy Medicaid:

Due to the passage of the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) on March 18, 2020, Georgia is now extending Pregnancy Medicaid benefits indefinitely as long as the HHS Secretary keeps the Public Health Emergency Declaration active.

Typically, participants are disenrolled after 60 days from the date of delivery.

Medicaid Information

If your client is utilizing Pregnancy Medicaid, they are likely eligible for additional support and supplies. Find out which Care Management Organization they have selected, and encourage them to connect with them to find out about:

- Case Management
- High-Risk Pregnancy Services
- Free Baby and Pregnancy Items
- Additional Breastfeeding Support

Amerigroup: 1-800-600-4441

PeachState: 1-800-704-1484

CareSource: 1-855-202-0729

WellCare: 1-866-231-1821

Beware of online courses and resources that claim to be free, but attempt to sell products once you sign-up. Be up front and honest with your client if you are an affiliate for any of these products or companies and/or if you earn any revenue from referring to their product or site.

Free Resources for Clients

Postpartum Care and Support

[Mayo Clinic - Vaginal Delivery Postpartum Care](#)

[Mayo Clinic - C-Section Delivery Postpartum Care](#)

[Barkin Index for Postpartum Functioning](#)

[AWOHNN Post-Birth Warning Signs - Video and Handouts](#)

Baby Supplies

[Helping Mamas Supply Bank \(metro-Atlanta\)](#)

Mental Health

[Postpartum Support International Helpline - 1-800-944-4773\(4PPD\)](#)

Send a text message to the Helpline: 503-894-9453 (English)

Mandar texto en español al 971-420-0294

[Postpartum Support International Online Support Groups](#)

Phone Applications (iOS and Android)

- Headspace (cost after trial)
- Calm (free with in app purchases)
- Rootd (cost after trial)
- Insight Timer (free with in app purchases)
- Aura (free with in app purchases)
- Sattva (free with in app purchases)

[Postpartum Progress New Mom Mental Health Checklist - Multiple Languages](#)

Prenatal & Postpartum Exercise

[Videos from NYC's Prenatal Yoga Center](#)

[Healthline Parenthood - Best Prenatal Yoga Videos of 2019](#)

[The Every Mom - Best Prenatal Workout Videos on Youtube](#)

[Postpartum Exercise Guidance from Mayo Clinic](#)

Baby Safety

[Georgia DPH Safe to Sleep Campaign Materials](#)

[Car Seat Safety - Healthy Children - A Project of AAP](#)

Beware of online courses and resources that claim to be free, but attempt to sell products once you sign-up. Be up front and honest with your client if you are an affiliate for any of these products or companies and/or if you earn any revenue from referring to their product or site.

Free Resources for Clients

Client Planning Tools

[Birth Plan Template - The Bump](#)

[Birth Plan Template - March of Dimes](#)

[Postpartum Care Template - Nashville Doulas](#)

[Postpartum Care Plan - Postpartum Support Virginia](#)

Other Suggestions

- Find out if there are **pelvic floor therapists** who are offering telehealth sessions or have free videos you can share with your postpartum clients.
- You may consider offering **additional incentives or services** to clients signing up for virtual doula services with your business such as:
 - Drop-off Aromatherapy Kits
 - Drop-off Welcome Kit (include hand sanitizer and other goodies)
 - Placenta Encapsulation (arrange safe pick up and delivery)
- Consider how you may be able to offer clients **support groups** to share important updates, de-stressing techniques, and other important information for anxious families awaiting their delivery date. Think about offering a postpartum support group as well for your clients. If you go this route, keep it consistent (post daily/weekly), and keep it evidence-based.
- If you haven't yet in your practice, consider creating an **e-newsletter or support group for new dads**. They have less resources created especially for them during this special, and now very stressful, time.
- Now might be a good time to **re-invest in your professional education**. Have you taken any courses on implicit bias? Want to expand your knowledge on essential oil use? Use any downtime you may have to make sure you are up to date on your practice knowledge.
- **Create a Pinterest page for your clients**. Include items like 'how to pack your go-bag' or 'tips for keeping pregnancy stress-free' - positive messages and fun tips that will help keep mom and partners occupied while they are at home.

Sample Contract for Virtual Doula Services

Service Agreement for Doula Support

The Role of Your Virtual Doula

Doulas do not provide medical diagnosis. Instead, they will refer you to the appropriate professional and possibly suggest questions that you may want to ask in order to facilitate a good discussion with your provider.

Doulas provide emotional and educational support. They do not perform clinical tasks such as checking blood pressure, fetal heart tones, vaginal exams or any other medical procedure that falls under the legal definition of practicing medicine.

Doulas do not make decisions for you. They will point you toward accurate, evidence based information in order to ensure an informed decision, discuss appropriate ways to convey decisions or preferences to your care providers and remind you of previously stated decisions. The responsibility of all decision making lies with you and your care provider.

Doulas do not speak to medical staff on your behalf. They can discuss concerns and options with you, as well as support you in voicing your concerns, ensuring that you have the opportunity to discuss choices with your care provider. It is your responsibility to convey your thoughts to the medical staff.

Doulas cannot promise any specific birth outcome. They cannot overrule you or a medical professional when a care decision has been made or intervene in your care

The above was adapted from a contract provided by Birth by the Sea: <http://birthbythesea.com/virtual-doula-contract/>

Sample Contract for Virtual Doula Services

Service Agreement for Doula Support

Methods of Contact

Per this agreement, I am agreeing to make myself available via the following methods of communication:

- Phone Call
- Text Message
- Zoom
- FaceTime
- WhatsApp
- Google Hangouts
- Other: _____

Virtual Doula Package Options

Please indicate which of the following package options you are selecting for the purpose of this agreement:

Option A: Full Virtual Doula Package

- Initial consultation (30 minutes) between client and doula (phone or online)
- 2 prenatal check-ins to discuss options during your pregnancy, labor, birth and postpartum via phone or video-conference
- Available via phone and text with any questions regarding your labor and birth experience from ___ weeks until ___ weeks after birth
- Assistance in creating your birth plan
- 24/7 on-call support from ___ weeks gestation until baby is born
- Phone call availability during labor to help assist with birth options, answer questions and help deciding when it is time to go to your hospital or birth center (video chat is also available if you prefer)
- 1 postpartum meeting to talk through birth story and ask postpartum questions that you may have via phone or video-conference

\$_____

Sample Contract for Virtual Doula Services

Service Agreement for Doula Support

Option B: A La Carte Options

You may also choose which options you would like to include in your service package from the following list:

Prenatal Service Options

Services Include: guidance with birth plan, discussion of labor and birth options, creating your birth environment and discussing induction options just to name a few! All information is evidence based.

- ___ 30-minute calls: \$___ each
- ___ 60-minute calls: \$___ each
- Three 60 minute call Package: \$___
- Six 60 minute Call Package: \$___

Labor Service Option

Phone call availability during labor to answer questions, help assist with birth options, comfort measures, and stress-reduction techniques (video chat is also available if you prefer).

\$___

Postpartum Service Options

Services include: breastfeeding support, comfort measures, information on paced feedings, cloth diapering guidance, baby-wearing support and more!

- ___30-minute calls: \$___ each
- ___60-minute calls: \$___ each
- Three 60 minute call Package: \$___

The Virtual Doula Packages section was adapted from a contract provided by Peace and Serenity Partners in Parenting, LLC:
<https://peaceandserenitybirthing.com/virtual-doula-services-2/>

Sample Contract for Virtual Doula Services

Service Agreement for Doula Support

Service Level Agreement

If you select Option A or the Labor Services A La Carte Option, one of your designated doulas will respond to messages and phone calls within ____ minutes.

Backup Doula

You acknowledge that in some cases, your primary doula may not be available during your labor. In this case, a designated back-up doula will be available to you per this contract agreement. You may opt to have them included in one of your prenatal check-ins should you choose those service options.

If you have an extended labor (lasting more than ____ hours), and the doula feels she is unable to support you appropriately due to exhaustion, the doula reserves the right to call in a backup doula for the remainder of your labor or for a period of time that will allow her to get adequate rest. You have the right to decline the backup doula, but there will be no reduction in fees.

Payment and Methods

Payment Schedule

A deposit in the amount of ____% of the total cost of your selected services is due within ____ days of signing this contract.

The remaining ____% must be paid in full within ____ business days from the date of your delivery.

Accepted Payment Methods

Payment will be accepted by: check, cash, credit card, Paypal, Venmo, or CashApp.

Paypal Account:

CashApp Account:

Venmo Account:

Checks should be made out to: _____ and sent to: _____.

Adapt these contract components in a way that makes sense for your business. Only offer services, communication methods and payment methods that work for you.

Sample Contract for Virtual Doula Services

Service Agreement for Doula Support

Payment and Methods Continued

Returned Checks

If you make a payment by check, and it is returned by your bank for any reason, a \$25 processing fee will apply and full payment in the form of cash only will be due immediately. Failure to pay the full fee in cash within 3 days of notification of your check being returned will result in cancellation of this contract and any monies already paid will be forfeited.

Cancellation

The deposit is non-refundable under any circumstances. This fee is earned when paid and covers the time spent prenatally, materials, administrative costs, holding space on the doula's calendar, etc

Fees whether paid in full or part are refundable if a written cancellation is received prior to ____ weeks. If we choose to cancel doula services, our doula's contract to provide any support or any other services is considered null and void at the time a refund is issued.

Release of Confidential Information

We give our permission, for the doula to take notes about us, including personal information we choose to disclose to her and information regarding our pregnancy, birth and postpartum care and outcomes, as well as any information regarding our child/ren. This information will be shared with the backup doula as means to ensure continuity of care. We understand that this information may be used for the purpose of certification as a doula or childbirth educator. We also understand that this information will be de-identified (made anonymous) and be used for statistical purposes.

The above sections on Cancellation and Release of Confidential Information were adapted from a contract provided by Puget Sound Doulas: <https://www.pugetsounddoulas.com/client-contract.html>

Sample Contract for Virtual Doula Services

Service Agreement for Doula Support

Indemnification

Client agrees to indemnify, defend and hold [insert doula business name], its agents, members, doulas, and representatives harmless from all claims, losses, judgments, damages, expenses and costs (including, without limitation, attorneys' fees and court costs), whether fixed or contingent, and whether or not adjudicated, arising from or in any way related to: (a) the breach of any of its obligations hereunder; (b) damage to real or tangible personal property of client or any third party as a result of the fault of client and not due to the fault of [insert doula business name] its agents members, doulas, or representatives, (c) bodily injury to any party caused by client and not caused by [insert doula business name] its agents members, doulas, or representatives; (d) any breach of representations or warranties regarding services of [insert doula business name] made by clients or any other third party; (e) payment of services owed to birthing facility; (f) any unauthorized act or omission of the doulas which may be determined to be binding upon [insert doula business name]; and (g) the negligence, recklessness or willful misconduct of the [insert doula business name] or its agent, doulas, members or representatives, (h) the aforementioned exceptions of services, including but not limited to, medical monitoring, medical decisions, medical opinion, treatment options, physician services, and medical services.

The above section on Indemnification was adapted from a contract provided by NOLA Nesting: <https://nolanesting.forms-db.com/view.php?id=24086>



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Coalition of Georgia

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