**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**I.    Responsibility to Clients**

1.  Service—The doula's primary focus is to meet the client's needs. A doula's opinion or decision on a topic should never be used to influence a client. If a doula feels she cannot serve a client because of known conflicts or personal convictions, she should respectfully seek to refer the client to another doula who may be a better fit.

2.  Referrals—The doula will make appropriate referrals to other professionals when a service is needed outside of doula's qualifications or scope of practice.

3.  Privacy—The doula will protect client's personal information from being publicized or shared with others outside of where permission has been granted.

4.  Reliability—The doula will fulfill her responsibility to the client to be present for all services agreed upon between doula and client. The doula should strive to have a back-up doula who is available to take her place in case of emergency and introduce the back-up doula to the client in advance if one is available.

5.  Respect—Doulas should maintain professionalism and respect in how they treat their clients in interactions in the community. Slander and other bad treatment of clients and their families is not acceptable.

**II.    Responsibility to Other Doulas and Birth Professionals**

1.  Courtesy—The doula will treat all colleagues with respect, fairness, and courtesy in business dealings, not with a competitive spirit, malicious spirit, or publicly attacking others.

2.  Healthcare Providers—As a professional working to improve maternal and infant wellness, it is important to treat all healthcare providers (doctors, nurses, midwives, etc.) with complete respect, not slandering healthcare providers to clients or in public forums.

### III. Responsibility to Doula Profession

1. Integrity—By maintaining personal and professional integrity, the doula is a representation in the community of what a doula is. Unprofessionalism damages the representation and profession of a doula.

2. Scope of Practice—By having and following a SOP, we can be consistent in the way we represent the doula profession and promote growth and acceptance of the profession in our communities and globally.

### IV. Responsibility to the Community

1. Maternal and Infant Wellness—As a member of our own respective communities, we seek to support any programs and community efforts that seek to improve maternal and infant wellness.

2. Maintaining integrity—It is our responsibility as birth professionals to maintain integrity, not only for the doula profession, but also for the good of those in our community, to work alongside other professionals with the same goals of serving families. Bullying and defamation will not be tolerated.

## SCOPE OF PRACTICE

The definition of a doula is "a woman who serves during pregnancy, birth, and postpartum," providing informational, physical, and emotional support to both the mother and her family. A doula is a non-medical professional who works under her scope of practice and is not a replacement for a healthcare provider or the client's partner.

### I. Services

1. A birth doula provides prenatal support, continual labor support, and initial postpartum support to mother and partner (if applicable) She may have home visits, phone, and email support leading up to labor to help prepare family emotionally and educationally.

2. A postpartum doula provides assistance to the mother and her family in their home that may include guidance with infant care and feeding, light housework and cooking, emotional and physical support for mother, guidance with

adjustment with siblings in the home, and any other duties agreed upon between the client and doula to give support in the weeks following giving birth.

## II. Limits

1. A doula is a non-medical professional who will not perform clinical tasks such as taking vitals, monitoring fetal heart tone, performing vaginal checks, or interpreting such tasks performed by licensed medical professionals.

2. A doula does not recommend or advise against any medical procedures to client.

3. A doula does not recommend or dispense medications to a client.

4. While a doula may provide informational resources to their client to make informed decisions, a doula will refer a client to their healthcare provider for all medical questions.

5. A doula does not speak for the client. The doula always seeks to empower the client to make her own informed decisions.

## III. Training and Experience

1. A Woman Who Serves Doula has been professionally trained and equipped to serve families during pregnancy and birth and seeks to continue her education as a birth professional by seeking out continuing education opportunities so that she may continue to offer high quality service to families in the community.

## IV. Record Keeping

1. Doulas are responsible to run their private business following their own local business laws and should uphold client confidentiality with all personal data, including names, addresses, phone numbers, details of birth or baby, and photos. Permission should be requested when posting any information online.

**V.   Legalities**

1. A Woman Who Serves Doula Program does not offer any kind of insurance or protection for your business, and as a training organization, accepts zero liability for any consequences that may result from a doula's personal business decisions and interactions with clients. Each doula is considered a private business owner, free from the certifying body, to operate her business with a business model she chooses and responsible for her own conduct as such. As an independent business owner, you are responsible to purchase personal business insurance if you desire that, understanding that in some cases doulas can be brought into lawsuits as a witness to the event and as someone who has hands-on contact with the mother and baby during birth or postpartum.

I agree to uphold A Woman Who Serves Code of Conduct and Scope of Practice as a professional member and understand failure to do so may result in my certification being revoked.

Signature/date: _____