

What Is a Doula?

A doula is a trained professional who can educate and prepare you and your family for birth, support you during labor and delivery, and help you with recovery and infant feeding after you have your baby.



NYC
Health



The benefits of doula care may include:

- Greater satisfaction with the birth experience
- Shorter labor
- Reduced chance of cesarean birth
- Reduced chance of medical intervention
- Better parent-baby bonding
- Increased rates of breastfeeding
- Reduced chance of preterm birth or low birth weight

"My doula helped me feel more confidence in the birthing room and understand what was happening in my body. It made me feel less afraid." — CDI Client

How Do I Sign Up?

To enroll or see if you qualify:

- Call 844-OK-DOULA (844-653-6852), Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Visit nyc.gov/health/cdi and contact a doula program that serves your neighborhood.
- Email cdi@health.nyc.gov.

"This is an awesome program! It should be accessible to all new mothers. ... Having a doula during my second pregnancy made a huge difference." — CDI Client



For more information, scan the QR code or visit nyc.gov/health/cdi. To request doula educational materials, call **311**.

Citywide Doula Initiative

Get No-Cost
Professional Support
for Your Birth!



What Is the Citywide Doula Initiative?

The **Citywide Doula Initiative (CDI)** helps reduce racial inequities in maternal health care and improve birth outcomes for all New Yorkers.

CDI doulas:

- Provide no-cost doula support in neighborhoods that lack access to this service
- Support you in making informed decisions

"My doula was really genuine. She was soft-spoken, emotionally supportive, and worked hard to get me resources." — CDI Client



- Are often members of the community they serve, with the same racial or ethnic background, culture, or language as their clients
- Are trained to provide respectful care that centers your experiences, values, and preferences
- Offer support in multiple languages, including Spanish, Haitian Creole, French, and American Sign Language

Eligibility

To enroll, you must meet both requirements:

- Live in our service area or in a shelter or foster home anywhere in NYC
- Have an income within the range that qualifies for Medicaid

Services are available regardless of age, race or ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, or insurance status.

What To Expect

When you enroll, a CDI coordinator will call you to discuss your needs. Then we will match you with a doula to provide support in your home and wherever you give birth.

During pregnancy (prenatal):

- Education on labor and birth, to help you birth with confidence
- Help creating and carrying out your childbirth plan
- Connection to resources, such as WIC (the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), childbirth education classes, and health insurance

During labor and childbirth:

- Continuous, hands-on physical and emotional support (such as comforting

touch, words of encouragement, aromatherapy, and guiding your partner in supporting you)

- Recommendations to make labor more comfortable, such as breathing and relaxation techniques
- Help talking with hospital staff to address questions or concerns you may have

After birth (postpartum):

- Help with infant feeding and caring for your newborn
- Checking in at home and helping with self-care
- Help finding additional support, such as breastfeeding counselors and mental health professionals, as needed

"I always remind [my clients] that they are doing something really, really amazing and magical with their body, and to listen to it, to really kind of sit with it and to lean into it."

— CDI Doula

"One of the most important aspects of our work as doulas is supporting the wishes, needs, and autonomy of pregnant and birthing parents." — CDI Doula

