

## Questions to Ask a Prospective Birth Doula

- What training have you had? (If doula is certified, you may consider checking with the organization.) What other education do you have?
- What continuing education or training do you participate in? Do you participate in any professional development groups?
- What is your philosophy about childbirth and supporting women and their partners through labor?
- Why did you become a professional childbirth support person? What do you like the most about your job? Least?
- Why do you feel labor support is useful?
- How much experience do you have? How many births have you attended?
- What do you provide that is different than what my partner, care provider or hospital staff can provide?
- What is your experience with our care provider and our chosen place of birth? Do you have any restrictions placed on you by my chosen place of birth? Have you ever had any conflicts with my chosen place of birth or care providers?
- How many clients do you take a month? Do you have any clients due near my due date?
- Do you have one or more back-up doula(s)? Can we contact and/or meet her ahead of time?
- What is your fee and what does it include? Do you offer a sliding scale? How is the payment(s) made? What is your refund policy?
- May we meet to discuss our birth plans and the role you will play in supporting me/ us through labor and birth?
- May we call you anytime with questions or concerns before and after the birth?
- When do you join women in labor? Where do you join women in labor- home, hospital/ birth place?
- How do you determine maternal well being at home?
- If someone suggests an intervention that you feel is unnecessary what will you do or say?
- How can you minimize the need for an episiotomy?

continued on back

- If I need a cesarean, will you be able to accompany me?
- Have you cared for anyone with a poor outcome? What was the situation?
- How long after the birth do you stay? Can you help with initial breastfeeding?
- Do you have any training or education in breastfeeding?
- Do you meet with me/ us after the birth to review labor and answer questions?
- Can you provide references?

Questions to ask yourself- Do you feel comfortable with the doula? What are your personal perceptions? Is she someone that is compatible with your lifestyle? Is she kind, warm, and enthusiastic? Is she knowledgeable? Does she communicate well? Is she a good listener? Is she comfortable with your choices or does she seem to have her own agenda? Does she make you feel confident in your ability to labor and birth? The way you feel with her may be more important than the number of births she's attended.

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