

Doula Guidelines

Virtua welcomes doulas as members of our patient's support teams, and we value your role as part of the care delivery team

Our desire is to work collaboratively with the mother's chosen support team to provide the best possible birth experience for her and her family. In order to ensure an optimal experience, we provide these guidelines for doulas planning to attend births at Virtua.

The doula will be considered a member of the care team in addition to the three members of the mother's support team who may be present during her labor and birth.

- While the patient is in triage and the determination of active labor is being made, the doula may accompany the mother in addition to the care partner
- In the case of a cesarean section, the doula may accompany the mother in the operating room in addition to the care partner to continue to provide support throughout the delivery.

The role of the doula is to give non-medical assistance to a woman during labor, providing emotional and physical support throughout the process of childbirth

The doula will not and cannot perform medical tasks such as taking vital signs, applying or removing the fetal heart monitor or oxygen, assisting the mother out of bed without approval from the medical staff or doing vaginal examinations.

Decisions about the patient's medical care will be made by the patient and her doctor/midwife and nurses. If the medical team wants to speak privately with the patient, the doula will honor this request and leave the room if asked to do so.

Doulas will be asked to respect the medical expertise of the physician/midwife as he/she has been chosen by the patient to utilize this expertise to ensure a safe birth experience. Decisions regarding the patient's care need to occur between the patient and her doctor/midwife.

Please note that Virtua retains the right to ask anyone to leave the patient care area/delivery room when it deems necessary, including doulas.

We welcome your questions and feedback.

Please feel free to contact us at childbirthconnection@virtua.org.

To learn more, visit virtua.org/maternity



