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Labor Support Agreement

I am very passionate about birth and truly feel helping others is something I am called to do. I believe natural birth is an amazing and rewarding experience that has the best outcomes for mother, baby, and the family as a whole but I will respect the decisions you make for your own family. I consider attending birth an extraordinary honor and privilege and will do all I can to compassionately and effectively help you achieve your desired birth experience!

What is a Labor Support Professional?

A labor support professional (LSP) is a person whom couples can hire to provide support to them as they labor and give birth. They are often very experienced and/or specially trained and certified and are also known as Labor Assistants, Doulas, Trained Labor Coaches, and Labor Companions.

My Services as a Labor Support Professional Include:

- 1 Complimentary Consultation (to assure a good match)
- 1 Prenatal Visit
- Birth Plan Assistance (if needed)
- 24 Hour On-call Availability (2 weeks prior to and 2 weeks after your due date)
- Photographs/Videos (if desired)
- A Written Birth Story
- Initial Assistance and Support with Breastfeeding (difficulties may need additional support of a lactation consultant—I can help w/ very basics)
- 2 Postpartum visits (around the 1st and 4th week after birth)
- Continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to mother and husband/helper during labor and birth which includes:
 - Guidance with positions, relaxation, staying focused, and other ways of keeping labor moving efficiently and effectively
 - Knowledge of medical interventions and alternatives
 - Massage and heat application
 - Helping the mother realize her own capabilities, how to work *with* her body, natural ways to avoid pain and ways to handle positive pain
 - If desired, prayer during labor (Christian)
 - Help with phone calls to family or friends during labor, getting food or drink for mother/father, fixing lights, temperature, music, and any number of other help requiring extra hands

Limitations:

- I cannot make decisions for you but I will give the necessary information to help you make an informed decision
- I will remind you of your wishes according to your birth plan if you are departing from them but will not make medical decisions for you
- I am not a medical professional and the medical professional you have chosen (doctor, certified midwife, etc.) will be solely responsible for the prediction, diagnosis, and treatment of any complication or risk factor; I do not perform clinical tasks (vaginal exams, fetal heart checks, blood pressure, etc.)
- I am your expert in normalcy and can offer emotional, physical, and informational support on ways to handle the normal challenges of labor and birth

- My presence does not *guarantee* a certain outcome but studies have shown the presence of a “doula” or LSP to be associated with: 50% reduction in cesareans, 25% shorter labors, 60% reduction in epidural requests, 40% reduction in oxytocin use, 30% reduction in analgesia use, and 40% reduction in forceps delivery*

**Mothering the Mother, How a Doula Can Help You Have a Shorter, Easier and Healthier Birth by Kennell, Klaus, and Kennell (1993)*

When Labor Begins:

I prefer to be notified when you first think you are in labor, at which point I can make suggestions. I ask for **at least one hour** to get to you after I have been asked to come (unless notice has already been given). For a hospital or birth center I will meet you after mother’s arrival and labor is active (earlier if you are feeling support is needed). For a home birth, I will come after labor is well established and preferably after midwife is also on her way.

Failure to Provide Services:

I will make every attempt to be available for your labor but in the unlikely event that I become *seriously* ill or have a *serious* family emergency I would be unable to fulfill my commitment. Unfortunately I do not have a backup LSP who can take my place if such an event were to occur. A full refund would be given with the sincerest of apologies.

Post-Partum Visits:

These visits are to check on you and your baby and assist you with newborn care and questions you may have. The second visit will also be a chance for us to discuss your birth and my services.

Fees:

The \$200 non-refundable deposit is due upon hiring me as your LSP and the full balance (\$450) is due at your first post-partum visit. If you have special circumstances that make this a hardship we can discuss other options.

In the event that you have a rapid birth and I am not informed soon enough or do not make it on time, the non-refundable deposit will be retained and the remaining balance not collected. If you change your mind and decide you do not need support during your labor and do not call me, the non-refundable deposit will be retained and the remaining balance not collected.

I/We have read this contract and are in agreement with the terms.

Date

Client Printed Name (mother)

Signature

Client Printed Name (father)

Signature

Labor Support Professional

Signature