

Testimony submitted via email.

Hello,

I have been watching this process from the local birth doula perspective for over 2 years now. It has been painful and heartbreaking to know we can make such a huge difference in so many growing families lives, but we are not being supported by our health care system. Once doulas get on the list of approved OHP birth doulas we can't do anything but wait and hope for a call for an OHP client. Then, even if the birth is attended and we help one family, how do we know we are getting paid and when? From what I have seen, this program is not working and the suggested payment offerings for birth doulas is just not enough. We want to help these low income and struggling families, as they can benefit greatly from our services. In order to help serve this community we need to be compensated accordingly for our time and work. The going rate for birth doulas is \$500-\$1200. This includes 3-6 prenatal visits, being on-call for 2-4 weeks, complete attendance through labor, birth, and immediate postpartum; as well as 2-3 postpartum visits. Not to mention having a back-up doula on-call to assure assistance whenever labor may begin. Thank you for acknowledging the serious need and required payment for such work we do.

There is so much evidence out there on how we make a difference and lower overall health care costs, seems like OHA would want a doula at every birth. This is just my opinion and I hope it is heard.

After 3 years, I hope we can make this progress quickly and efficiently. For the sake of all the families left under supported and traumatized by the way our culture guides and receives new life into our community. This is a sacred and beautiful time for every single birth that occurs, it is rarely a medical emergency and should be respected as such. Birth Doulas help to humanize our sterile hospital birth settings and bring a greater connection and understanding between families and the hospital staff. You can't ignore the evidence on how birth doulas make a difference. Thank you for taking the time to listen to my story and perspective. I hope I have been able to shed some light on what it's like on our end.

Blessings & Gratitude,

Elizabeth Reed

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