

Doula Guidelines

At University Hospitals, we welcome doulas and value the important work they do in providing emotional and physical comfort to patients before, during, and after birth.

The health and safety of you and your baby will always be the top priority for your healthcare team. Understanding and adhering to University Hospitals' doula guidelines allows us to not only maintain safety but to ensure that your labor environment remains calm, supportive, and always with you at the center of care.

What is a doula?

A doula is a professional trained to provide non-medical comfort measures and emotional and psychological support to laboring patients and their families. They are not employed by University Hospitals and are not medical providers. They are present at the request of the patient.

During your hospital stay, a doula can:

- Use touch, movement, and positioning to provide physical support.
- Offer encouragement, reassurance, and presence to provide emotional support.
- Share information and participate in conversations to help you understand the labor and delivery process.
- Encourage you to talk to your medical team about your care.

During your hospital stay, a doula cannot:

- Provide medical care including exams (cervical exams, checking blood pressure or fetal heart tones).
- Offer medical advice, make medical diagnoses, or provide or recommend medication.
- Document or access your medical record.
- Make medical decisions without you.
- Handle medical equipment.
- Discuss your care with your healthcare team outside of your labor or postpartum room.
- Interfere with your medical care or treatment prior to and including the birth of your baby.
- Solicit clients while in the hospital.

Your doula must sign in at the front desk and bring and display a badge identifying them as a doula throughout their time in the hospital. By requesting your doula's presence, you agree to allow University Hospitals to share protected health information in front of your doula.

Your doula will be asked to leave the hospital if they violate any of our guidelines, policies, or procedures, or if there is a risk to patient health, safety, or privacy as determined by your care team. University Hospitals is not responsible for the actions of any doula who is not an employee of University Hospitals.