

S.B. 192 Medicaid Doula Services

Sponsor: Sen. Luz Escamilla (D- Salt Lake)

Position: We support SB 192.

Overview:

SB 192 would:

- Require the Utah Department of Health and Human Services to consult with individuals representing patients, doulas, physicians, nurses, and health care facilities to develop a Medicaid state plan amendment for adding doula coverage.
- Require the Medicaid state plan amendment for doula coverage to include both prenatal and postpartum care.

Background:

A doula is a trained professional who provides continuous physical, emotional and informational support to their client before, during and shortly after childbirth. Doulas are typically not medical trained but can have medical experience. Doulas work alongside healthcare providers in medical settings and also in their client's home.

Doulas can provide care during prenatal period, during labor and childbirth, and postpartum during the weeks after birth.

According to the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, six states (Oregon, Minnesota, New Jersey, Florida, Maryland, and now Virginia) currently reimburse for doula services in Medicaid. In addition, six other states (California, Washington D.C., Illinois, Indiana, Nevada, & Rhode Island) plan to get CMS approval to implement doula coverage in Medicaid by 2023.

Medicaid state plan amendments can be designed to cover doula care as “preventive services” to make it easier to reimburse non-medical providers, including doulas, for services that are recommended by a licensed provider.

Talking Points:

- Studies show that people who work with a doula during pregnancy and childbirth are less likely to deliver a pre-term or a low birthweight baby, less likely to have postpartum depression, and more likely to try breastfeeding.
- Medicaid covers 20% of all births in Utah.
- S.B. 192 passed the Senate Health and Human Services committee in a 6-0 vote.
- We support S.B. 192 because people who receive Medicaid for their pregnancy should have access to doula care to reduce complications for Medicaid pregnancies and births.

Resources:

[Doula Services in Medicaid: State Progress in 2022](#), Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, June 2022.

[Doula Care and Maternal Health: An Evidence Review](#), ASPE Issue Brief, December 2022