

**THIS CA UPDATE HAS BEEN SENT TO THE FOLLOWING:****COUNTIES:**

- Imperial
- Riverside/San Bernardino
- Los Angeles
- Orange
- Sacramento
- San Diego

**LINES OF BUSINESS:**

- Molina Medi-Cal Managed Care
- Molina Medicare
- Molina Marketplace (Covered CA)

**PROVIDER TYPES:**

- Medical Group/ IPA/MSO**
  - Primary Care**
  - IPA/MSO
  - Directs
- Specialists**
  - Directs
  - IPA
- Hospitals**
  - Ancillary**
  - CBAS
  - SNF/LTC
  - DME
  - Home Health
  - Other

## Doula Services APL 22-031

This is an informational notification to Molina Healthcare of California (MHC) network providers to provide guidance regarding the qualifications for providing Doula services.

This notification is based on an All-Plan Letter (APL) 22-031, which can be found in full on the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) website at: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Documents/MMCDAPLsandPolicyLetters/APL2022/APL22-031-Doula-Services.pdf>.

### **BACKGROUND**

Doulas provide person-centered, culturally competent care that supports the racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity of Members while adhering to evidence-based best practices. Doula services are aimed at preventing perinatal complications and improving health outcomes for birthing parents and infants.

Doulas are birth workers who provide health education, advocacy, and physical, emotional, and non-medical support for pregnant and postpartum persons before, during, and after childbirth, including support during miscarriage, stillbirth, and abortion. Doulas are not licensed, and they do not require supervision.

Doulas also offer various types of support, including health navigation; lactation support; development of a birth plan; and linkages to community-based resources.

### **POLICY**

#### **WHEN IS THIS HAPPENING:**

Effective January 1, 2023, MHC will provide Doula services for prenatal, perinatal, and postpartum Members. Doula services can be provided virtually or in person with locations in any setting including, but not limited to, homes, office visits, hospitals, or alternative birth centers.

#### **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:**

An initial recommendation for Doula services includes the following authorizations:

- One initial visit.
- Up to eight additional visits that can be provided in any combination of prenatal and postpartum visits.
- Support during labor and delivery (including labor and delivery resulting in a stillbirth), abortion, or miscarriage.
- Up to two extended three-hour postpartum visits after the end of a pregnancy

All visits are limited to one per day, per Member. Only one Doula can bill for a visit provided to the same Member on the same day, excluding labor and delivery. One prenatal visit or one postpartum visit can be provided on the same day as labor and delivery, stillbirth, abortion, or miscarriage support. The prenatal visit or postpartum visit billed on the same calendar day as birth can be billed by a different Doula.

If a member requests or requires pregnancy-related services that are available through Medi-Cal, then the Doula should work with the Member's Primary Care Provider or work with MHC to refer the Member to a Network Provider who is able to render the service. These Medi-Cal services include but are not limited to:

- Behavioral health services
- Belly binding after cesarean section by clinical personnel
- Clinical case coordination
- Health care services related to pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period
- Childbirth education group classes
- Comprehensive health education including orientation, assessment, and planning (Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program services)
- Hypnotherapy (non-specialty mental health service)
- Lactation consulting, group classes, and supplies
- Nutrition services (assessment, counseling, and development of care plan)
- Transportation
- Medically appropriate Community Supports services

A doula is not prohibited from providing assistive or supportive services in the home during a prenatal or postpartum visit (i.e., a doula may help the postpartum person fold laundry while providing emotional support and offering advice on infant care). The visit must be face-to-face, and the assistive or supportive service must be incidental to doula services provided during the prenatal or postpartum visit. The Member cannot be billed for the assistive or supportive service.

### **Non-Covered Services**

Doula services do not include diagnosis of medical conditions, provision of medical advice, or any type of clinical assessment, exam, or procedure. The following services are **not** covered under Medi-Cal or as Doula services:

- Belly binding (traditional/ceremonial)
- Birthing ceremonies (i.e., sealing, closing the bones, etc.)
- Group classes on babywearing
- Massage (maternal or infant)
- Photography
- Placenta encapsulation
- Shopping
- Vaginal steams
- Yoga

### **Member Eligibility Criteria for Doula Services**

To be eligible for Doula services, and be covered under Medi-Cal managed care, a beneficiary must be eligible for Medi-Cal, enrolled with MHC, and have a recommendation for Doula services from a physician or other licensed practitioner of the healing arts.

### **Medi-Cal Eligibility Checks**

Doulas must verify the Member's Medi-Cal eligibility for the month of service. Doulas must contact MHC to verify eligibility

## **Recommendation for Doula Services**

A Member would meet the criteria for a recommendation for Doula services if they are pregnant, or were pregnant within the past year, and would either benefit from Doula services or they request Doula services. Doula services can only be provided during pregnancy; labor and delivery, including stillbirth; miscarriage; abortion; and within one year of the end of a member's pregnancy.

## **Documentation Requirements**

Doula services require a written recommendation by a physician or other licensed practitioner of the healing arts acting within their scope of practice under state law. The recommending physician or licensed practitioner does not need to be enrolled in Medi-Cal or be a Network Provider within MHC.

The initial recommendation can be provided through the following methods:

- Written recommendation in Member's record.
- Standing order for doula services by MCP, physician group, or other group by a licensed Provider.
- Standard form signed by a physician or other licensed practitioner that a member can provide to the doula.

A second recommendation is required for additional visits during the postpartum period. A recommendation for additional visits during the postpartum period cannot be established by standing order. The additional recommendation authorizes nine or fewer additional postpartum visits.

## **Doula Provider Requirements and Qualifications**

All Doulas must be at least 18 years old, possess an adult/infant Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (i.e., CPR) certification, and have completed Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act training. Additionally, a Doula must qualify by meeting either the training or experience pathway, as described below:

- Training Pathway:
  - Complete a minimum of 16 hours of training in the following areas:
    - Lactation support
    - Childbirth education
    - Foundations on anatomy of pregnancy and childbirth
    - Nonmedical comfort measures, prenatal support, and labor support techniques
    - Developing a community resource list
  - Provide support at a minimum of three births
- Experience Pathway
  - All of the following:
    - At least five years of active Doula experience in either a paid or volunteer capacity within the previous seven years.
    - Attestation to skills in prenatal, labor, and postpartum care as demonstrated by the following: Three written client testimonial letters, or professional letters of recommendation from any of the following: a physician, licensed behavioral health provider, nurse practitioner, nurse midwife, licensed midwife, enrolled Doula, or community-based organization.
    - Letters must be written within the last seven years. One letter must be from either a licensed Provider, a community-based organization, or an enrolled doula. "Enrolled doula" means a doula enrolled either through DHCS or through a Medi-Cal Managed Health Care Plan.

- Continuing Education:
  - Doulas must complete three hours of continuing education in maternal, perinatal, and/or infant care every three years
  - Doulas must provide evidence of completed training to DHCS upon request

### **Doula Enrollment Requirements**

Doulas who wish to provide services to MHC members will need to meet minimum qualifications, obtain a National Provider Identifier (NPI) number, enroll via the DHCS Medi-Cal Provider Application, and Validation Enrollment (PAVE) processes, and enter a contract with MHC.

### **Reimbursement, Claims and Billing**

- MHC will reimburse Doulas according to their Network Provider Contract
- Claims for Doula services must be submitted with allowable current procedural terminology codes as outlined in: <https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/publications/masters-mtp/part2/doula.pdf>.
- Doulas cannot double bill for Doula services that are duplicative to services that are reimbursed through other benefits.

### **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:**

For a comprehensive look into Doula training requirements, benefits, claims, and resources, check out MHC's Doula Training presentation: <https://www.molinahealthcare.com/-/media/Molina/PublicWebsite/PDF/Providers/ca/Medicaid/Resources-and-Training/Doula-Training.pdf>

### **WHAT IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE?**

If you have any questions regarding the notification, please contact your Molina Provider Services Representative below:

<b>Service County Area</b>	<b>Provider Services Representative</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
California Hospital Systems	Deletha Foster	909-577-4351	<a href="mailto:Deletha.Foster@molinahealthcare.com">Deletha.Foster@molinahealthcare.com</a>
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*If you are not contracted with Molina and wish to opt out of the Just the Fax, email: [mhcproviderjustthefax@molinahealthcare.com](mailto:mhcproviderjustthefax@molinahealthcare.com)  
Please include Provider Name, NPI, County, and Fax Number and you will be removed within 30 days.*