

1 State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H2/13/25 S4/3/25*

2 95th General Assembly

A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1252

4

5 By: Representative L. Johnson

6 *By: Senator Irvin*

7

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For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE CERTIFIED COMMUNITY-BASED
10 DOULA CERTIFICATION ACT; TO CERTIFY BIRTH AND
11 POSTPARTUM DOULAS IN THIS STATE TO IMPROVE MATERNAL
12 AND INFANT OUTCOMES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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Subtitle

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22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 17, is amended to add an additional
25 chapter to read as follows:

26

CHAPTER 108

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CERTIFIED COMMUNITY-BASED DOULA CERTIFICATION ACT

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Subchapter 1 - General Provisions

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17-108-101. Title.

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This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Certified
34 Community-Based Doula Certification Act".

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17-108-102. Definitions.



1 As used in this chapter:

2 (1) "Certified community-based doula" means an individual who is
3 a trained professional and provides nonclinical emotional, physical, and
4 informational support to women, before and during pregnancy and continuing
5 through the postpartum period; and

6 (2) "Health benefit plan" means an individual, blanket, or group
7 plan, policy, or contract for healthcare services issued or delivered in this
8 state by a healthcare insurer, health maintenance organization, hospital
9 medical service corporation, or self-insured governmental or church plan in
10 this state.

11 Subchapter 2 - Certification

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13 17-108-201. Certified community-based doula – Certification.

14 (a) The Department of Health shall issue a certification to be a
15 certified community-based doula to an individual who:

16 (1) Is eighteen (18) years of age or older;

17 (2) Submits evidence of:

18 (A) Maintaining a certification from a doula certification
19 organization designated by the department under § 17-108-203; or

20 (B) Holding a certificate as a doula by the Doula Alliance
21 of Arkansas; and

22 (3) Submits an application with an application fee of fifty
23 dollars (\$50.00).

24 (b)(1) A certification under this section is valid for two (2) years
25 after the date of issuance.

26 (2) To renew a certification, a doula shall:

27 (A)(i) Complete ten (10) hours of professional development
28 requirements and training over two (2) years.

29 (ii) The department, in conjunction with the Doula
30 Alliance of Arkansas, may adopt rules relating to the tracking by the
31 department of professional development and training; and

32 (B) Submit a renewal application with a renewal
33 application fee as determined by the department.

34 (c) The department shall create and maintain a registry of certified
35 community-based doulas to be made available to the public.

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1 17-108-202. Suspension, revocation, nonissuance, or nonrenewal.

2 (a) The Department of Health may suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue
3 or renew the certification of a certified community-based doula for:

4 (1) Securing a certification under this chapter through fraud or
5 deceit;

6 (2) Unethical conduct, gross ignorance, or inefficiency in the
7 conduct of his or her practice;

8 (3) Using a false name or an alias in his or her practice;

9 (4) Violating any provision of this chapter; or

10 (5) Failing to comply with any of the requirements for issuance
11 of the certification.

12 (b) Proceedings under this section shall comply with the Arkansas
13 Administrative Procedure Act, § 25-15-201 et seq.

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15 17-108-203. Designated doula certification organizations.

16 (a) The Department of Health, in conjunction with the Doula Alliance
17 of Arkansas, shall establish criteria for an organization to be designated as
18 a doula certification organization.

19 (b)(1) The department, in conjunction with the Doula Alliance of
20 Arkansas, shall periodically review the doula certification organizations
21 designated by the department.

22 (2) The department, in conjunction with the Doula Alliance of
23 Arkansas, may:

24 (A) Designate additional organizations as doula
25 certification organizations for the purpose of certifying doulas for
26 inclusion on the registry of certified community-based doulas; and

27 (B)(i) Remove the designation of a doula certification
28 organization previously designated.

29 (ii) If the department removes a designation, the
30 department shall provide notice of the removal by publication on the
31 department's website and specify the date after which a certification by the
32 doula certification organization no longer authorizes a doula certified by
33 the doula certification organization to be included on the certified
34 community-based doula registry.

35 (c)(1) A doula certification organization seeking designation under
36 this section shall provide the department with evidence that the doula

1 certification organization satisfies designation criteria established by the
2 department.

3 (2) If the department designates a doula certification
4 organization under this section, the department shall provide notice of the
5 designation by publication on the department's website for the certified
6 community-based doula registry and specify the date after which a
7 certification by the doula certification organization authorizes a doula
8 certified by the organization to be included on the certified community-based
9 doula registry.

10 (d) This section does not prohibit an individual from submitting his
11 or her doula certification to the department without involvement of a doula
12 certification organization.

13 Subchapter 3 - Miscellaneous Provisions

14 17-108-301. Scope of practice.

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16 A certified community-based doula under this chapter shall perform only
17 the following types of services:

18 (1) Providing childbirth education;

19 (2) Helping pregnant women navigate the healthcare system;

20 (3) Advocating for pregnant women before, during, and after the
21 birth of a child;

22 (4) Connecting pregnant women with community resources; and

23 (5) Supporting pregnant women with continuous emotional and
24 physical support throughout labor and birth and intermittently during the
25 prenatal and postpartum periods.

26 17-108-302. Patient and personal data and information.

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28 (a) Patient and personal data and information accessed or attained by
29 a certified community-based doula under this chapter is exempt from
30 disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq.,
31 and is confidential and privileged as otherwise required by federal law.

32 (b) If a certified community-based doula under this chapter does not
33 maintain the confidential and privileged nature of the patient data or
34 information, the doula shall be subject to any penalty under state and
35 federal law for a breach of confidential patient data or information.
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17-108-303. Certified community-based doula compensation.

(a) A certified community-based doula under this chapter shall receive compensation for services provided from:

(1) The Arkansas Medicaid Program; and

(2) A health benefit plan.

(b) Services described in subsection (a) of this section shall include support during a hospital delivery and during the prenatal and postpartum periods as defined through rules established by the Department of Human Services.

17-108-304. Rules.

(a) The Department of Health may promulgate rules relating to the certification and regulation of certified community-based doulas under this subchapter and relating to the designation of an organization as a doula certification organization.

(b) On or before December 31, 2025, the Department of Human Services shall promulgate rules relating to the reimbursement of doulas under the Arkansas Medicaid Program.

/s/L. Johnson