



Doula Association of Ireland Code of Ethics

Doula Association of Ireland members:

- Are accountable for their own practice in whatever environment they choose to work. In all circumstances the safety and welfare of the mother and baby must be of primary importance.
- Offer emotional, educational and physical support, but not advice, to the mother and/or parents, exploring with them their various options based on current medical evidence, enabling them to make their own decisions about the appropriate course of action, and then supporting them in their decisions.
- Do not advocate or speak for the parents in any situation - it is our philosophy that parents are more empowered and have better birth experiences when they adopt a healthy curiosity to procedures or tests that are offered to them. We will help the parents increase their confidence levels when working with medical personnel but will not act for the parents.
- Work to maintain the highest level of care and support possible, all the time striving to be sensitive, nurturing, empathic, non-judgmental, knowledge-based, flexible, reliable, well-organized, practical and protective of the mother's/family's environment.
- Do not perform clinical or medical tasks, diagnose medical conditions or give medical advice.
- Will explain medical procedures.
- Does not make decisions for the parents.
- Will refer clients to other appropriate resources/professionals should the client have needs beyond the scope of their doula role.
- Will accurately represent their education and experience and will not mislead other doulas, clients or other birth professionals (i.e. websites, leaflets, emails, interviews, etc.) as to their level of doula education or experience.
- Will be honest and show integrity and respect at all times towards their clients, doula colleagues and the other professionals with whom they may be working alongside.
- Will not discuss personal and confidential information which has been disclosed to them by their clients in the course of their doula work with them, without the express permission of those clients.
- Will keep records of their activities e.g. of births attended and/or postnatal support roles.
- Are advised to have a contract (preferably written) with their clients.
- Will strive to develop and maintain positive work relationships within the doula and birthing community.
- Will continue to enhance their skills and education by attending courses, workshops and lectures as they become available.
- Will keep current on best available research.