

**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 23-024

This is an advisory notification to Molina Healthcare of California (MHC) network providers to provide guidance regarding the qualifications for providing Doula services, effective for dates of service on or after January 1, 2023. (Supersedes APL 22-031)

This notification is based on an All-Plan Letter (APL) 23-024, which can be found in full on the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) website at <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Documents/MMCDAPsandPolicyLetters/APL2023/APL23-024.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 THIS IS HAPPENING:**

##### **Covered Doula Services**

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

Doulas are not prohibited from teaching classes that are available at no cost to Members to whom they are providing Doula services.

### **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 MHC, physician group, or other group by a licensed Provider.
- Standard form, such as the DHCS Medi-Cal Doula Services Recommendation, signed by a physician or other licensed practitioner that a Member can provide to the Doula. MHC can develop a recommendation form that best meets the needs of MHC and Provider.

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, provide proof of an adult and infant Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (i.e., CPR) certification from the American Red Cross or American Heart Association, and attest they have completed basic 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:**

- Certificate of Completion for a minimum of 16 hours of training, which includes all of the following topics:
  - 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
- Attest that they have provided support at a minimum of three births

#### **Experience Pathway:**

- All of the following:
  - Attest that they have provided services in the capacity of a Doula either a paid or volunteer capacity for at least five years. The five years of experience in the capacity as a Doula must have occurred within the last seven years.
  - 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 MHC.

#### **Continuing Education:**

MHC will ensure Doulas complete three hours of continuing education in maternal, perinatal, and/or infant care every three years. Doulas must maintain evidence of completed training to be made available to DHCS upon request.

#### **Provider Enrollment**

Network Providers, including those who will operate as Providers of Doula services, are required to enroll as Medi-Cal Providers, consistent with APL 22-013, "Provider Credentialing/Re-Credentialing

and Screening/Enrollment," or subsequent updates or any superseding APL, if there is a state-level enrollment pathway for them to do so.

### **Access Requirements for Doula Services**

If the Member desires to have a Doula during labor and delivery, MHC will work with their In-Network hospitals and birthing centers to allow the Doula, in addition to the support person(s), to be present.

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

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

| Service County Area               | Provider Relations Representative                                   | Contact Number   | Email Address  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| California Hospital Systems       | Deletha Foster<br>Teresa Suarez<br>Laura Gonzalez                   | 909-577-4351<br>562-549-3782<br>562-549-4887                 | <a href="mailto:Deletha.Foster@molinahealthcare.com">Deletha.Foster@molinahealthcare.com</a><br><a href="mailto:Teresa.Suarez2@molinahealthcare.com">Teresa.Suarez2@molinahealthcare.com</a><br><a href="mailto:Laura.Gonzalez3@molinahealthcare.com">Laura.Gonzalez3@molinahealthcare.com</a>   |
| Los Angeles                       | Clemente Arias<br>Christian Diaz<br>Daniel Amirian<br>LaToya Watts  | 562-517-1014<br>562-549-3550<br>562-549-4809<br>562-549-4069 | <a href="mailto:Clemente.Arias@molinahealthcare.com">Clemente.Arias@molinahealthcare.com</a><br><a href="mailto:Christian.Diaz@molinahealthcare.com">Christian.Diaz@molinahealthcare.com</a><br><a href="mailto:Daniel.Amirian@molinahealthcare.com">Daniel.Amirian@molinahealthcare.com</a><br><a href="mailto:Latoya.Watts@molinahealthcare.com">Latoya.Watts@molinahealthcare.com</a>   |
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| San Bernardino / Riverside County | Vanessa Lomeli  | 909-577-4355   | <a href="mailto:Vanessa.Lomeli2@molinahealthcare.com">Vanessa.Lomeli2@molinahealthcare.com</a>   |
| Riverside County                  | Mimi Howard   | 562-549-3532   | <a href="mailto:Smimi.Howard@molinahealthcare.com">Smimi.Howard@molinahealthcare.com</a>   |
| San Diego / Imperial County       | Briana Givens<br>Salvador Perez<br>Dolores Ramos<br>Lincoln Watkins | 562-549-4403<br>562-549-3825<br>562-549-4900<br>858-300-7722 | <a href="mailto:Briana.Givens@molinahealthcare.com">Briana.Givens@molinahealthcare.com</a><br><a href="mailto:Salvador.Perez@molinahealthcare.com">Salvador.Perez@molinahealthcare.com</a><br><a href="mailto:Dolores.Ramos@molinahealthcare.com">Dolores.Ramos@molinahealthcare.com</a><br><a href="mailto:Lincoln.Watkins@molinahealthcare.com">Lincoln.Watkins@molinahealthcare.com</a> |