



**Tallahassee Doula Co-Op's  
Bylaws and Code of Ethics**  
*Fashioned after DONA's Code of Ethics*  
*Revised 3/2018*

**Our Code of Ethics helps us to practice with integrity by clearly defining our ethical responsibilities to clients, colleagues, the profession, and society. It requires us to maintain high standards of personal integrity and professional competence and practice.**

**I. Rules of Conduct**

- **Propriety.** All members of the Tallahassee Doula Co-Op (TDC) should maintain high standards of personal conduct in the capacity or identity as a labor or postpartum doula. TDC doulas should wear TDC shirts and/or name tags when representing the co-op, whenever possible, especially at hospitals.
- **Competence and Professional Development.** The members of the TDC should strive to become and remain proficient in the professional practice and performance of professional functions through continuing education, affiliation with related organizations, and associations with other doulas and birth professionals. It is not required of members that they be associated or certified through a specific doula organization. However, certification is encouraged.
- **Integrity.** The doula should act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity.
- **Social Media.** On social media platforms, the doula should extend respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith towards doulas and on behalf of the doula profession. The influence on students, consumers and fellow doulas extends beyond time in a birth, postpartum session or workshop setting. When engaging on social media platforms, the doula agrees to clarify that any opinions are his/her own, show respect in each communication, use good judgment in sharing only public information, and be aware that social media content is permanent. We encourage TDC doulas to avoid showing an extreme position on possible incendiary topics such as; circumcision, vaccines, formula feeding, sleep training, and opinions on local providers. When discussing local care providers care should be taken to not promote one provider over another.
- **Dues.** All members of the Co-Op are expected to contribute an equal share of the Co-Op's expenses via annual membership dues. A doula who joined in the middle of the membership cycle (January-December) and paid \$50 when joining, will pay a prorated portion of the following full membership year so that a total of \$4.17 per month has been paid. The current annual membership dues are \$50 (subject to change), and cover the Co-Op's expenses,

including marketing (web and print), booths at events, giveaways/door prizes, etc. In exchange for annual dues, the Co-Op members receive client referrals, exposure at Co-Op events, marketing on the Co-Op website, and support from the other members. If the Co-Op's accounts are in need of replenishment (below \$50), all members will be expected to contribute an equal amount to reach the minimum agreed upon dollar amount (\$25). If there is money leftover at the end of the year, it will remain in the Co-Op's account to cover any future unforeseen expenses. Annual dues must be paid each January. Non-Payment of dues by January 31st will result in removal from the cooperative.

- **Voting.** It is required that all business-related votes receive a minimum of two-thirds votes to pass, except new membership which requires a unanimous decision.

## II. Ethical Responsibility to Clients

- **Primacy of Client's Interests.** The doula's primary responsibility is to her or his clients.
- **Rights and Prerogatives of Clients.** The doula should make every effort to foster maximum self-determination on the part of their clients.
- **Confidentiality and Privacy.** The doula should respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional service.
- **Obligation to Serve.** The doula should assist each client seeking labor support either by providing services or making appropriate referrals.
- **Reliability.** When the doula agrees to work with a particular client, their obligation is to do so reliably, without fail, for the term of the agreement. We expect TDC doulas to be on time to interviews and meetings and respond to emails and phone calls in a timely manner.
- **Fees.** When setting fees, the doula should ensure that they are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with services performed and with due regard for the profession and a client's ability to pay. It is suggested that the minimum amount charged for doula services is \$450. If necessary, TDC doulas may work with payment plans and be open to bartering with clients who cannot afford doula services within the posted payment schedule.
- **Contracts.** All TDC doulas are expected to have a signed contract for services for each client. The doula must clearly state their fees to the client in writing, and describe the services provided, terms of payment, and refund policies. Each contract must also state TDC's Absolution of Responsibility Policy: "Each member of the Co-Op works independently of the Co-Op. The Co-Op is not responsible and cannot be held legally accountable for the birth or postpartum experience of the Co-Op members' clients."

## III. Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

- **Respect, Fairness, and Courtesy.** The members of the TDC should treat colleagues with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith. TDC does not tolerate discrimination (including age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, disability, or marital status or any other legally recognized protected group) and will uphold federal, state, and local laws, regulations or ordinances.
- **Dealing with Colleagues' Clients.** The doula has the responsibility to relate to the clients of colleagues with full professional courtesy.
- **TDC's Absolution of Responsibility Policy.** Each member of the Co-Op works independently of the Co-Op. Members are expected to be held to the highest work ethic. The Co-Op is not responsible and cannot be held legally accountable for the birth or postpartum experience of the

Co-Op members' clients. It is required that this be stated in the signed agreement between the Co-Op doulas and their clients.

- **Backup.** It is the responsibility of the Co-Op members to line-up one or more backup doulas for their clients, as needed. It is preferred that TDC doulas first attempt to line-up a backup within the TDC before reaching out to community doulas. We expect all TDC doulas to be available as backup at some point during each year. The agreement between these doulas is at their own discretion and should be worked out beforehand in writing as much as possible. Suggestions for this arrangement include: if the backup doula covers the entire birth, the primary doula keeps a portion to cover time with the clients during the prenatal appointment(s); if the backup doula covers for part of a birth, it is expected TDC doulas will compensate the backup fairly by methods such as prorating the amount of time each doula spent with the client and divide the fees accordingly.
- **Events.** Events include meetings, an annual retreat, Speed Dating, community festivals, expos, and workshops. Meetings will be held as needed. Members are encouraged to participate in events as much as they are able. We understand that our lives are busy and that participation will ebb and flow but members who do not attend at least two events per year will be asked to leave the Co-Op.

#### **IV. Ethical Responsibility to the Labor Support Profession**

- **Maintaining the Integrity of the Profession.** The doula should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession.
- **Maintaining Scope of Practice**

#### **V. Ethical Responsibility to Society**

- **Promoting Maternal and Child Welfare.** The doula should promote the general health of women and their babies, and whenever possible, that of their family and friends as well.

#### **VI. New Membership Process**

- Doulas interested in joining the Co-Op will need to complete the Membership Application and provide a copy of your background check.
- Applicants will be notified after the TDC review process has been completed in May of every year as to if they have been accepted into the Co-Op. If accepted, the \$50 membership fee will be paid for the first year of membership. If not accepted, applicants may apply again the following year.
- Members will be required to participate in a probationary period of three months or three births, whichever is the longer period of time.