
SENATE BILL 6172

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Senators Nobles, Randall, Dhingra, Frame, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Lovelett, Nguyen, Saldaña, Shewmake, Trudeau, and C. Wilson

Read first time 01/11/24. Referred to Committee on Health & Long Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to birth doulas; amending RCW 18.47.010 and
2 18.47.030; and adding a new section to chapter 18.47 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 18.47.010 and 2022 c 217 s 1 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter
7 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

8 (1) (~~"Department" means the department of health.~~

9 ~~(2))~~ "Birth doula" means a person that is a nonmedical birth
10 coach or support person trained to provide physical, emotional, and
11 informational support to birthing persons during pregnancy from the
12 date of confirmed conception, antepartum, labor, birth, and the
13 postpartum period. Birth doulas advocate for and support birthing
14 people and families to self-advocate by helping them to know their
15 rights and make informed decisions. Birth doulas do not provide
16 medical care.

17 ~~((3))~~ (2) "Culturally congruent care" means a duty to learn
18 respect for and uphold a birth doula's client's cultural practices
19 around birth regardless of the birth doula's identity. "Culturally
20 congruent care" includes a birth doula's duty to use community

1 resources and networks to help families access other doulas from the
2 same background, religion, culture, and community as them.

3 (3) "Department" means the department of health.

4 (4) "Postpartum period" means the 12-month period beginning on
5 the last day of the pregnancy.

6 ~~((4))~~ (5) "Secretary" means the secretary of health.

7 **Sec. 2.** RCW 18.47.030 and 2022 c 217 s 3 are each amended to
8 read as follows:

9 (1) The secretary shall:

10 (a) In collaboration with community partners who advance
11 equitable access to improve perinatal outcomes and care through
12 holistic services for black and brown communities, adopt rules
13 establishing the competency-based requirements that a birth doula
14 must meet to obtain certification. The rules must establish processes
15 that allow for applicants to meet the competency-based requirements
16 through the following pathways:

17 (i) Successful completion of training and education programs
18 approved by the secretary, including proof of knowledge related to
19 culturally congruent care; and

20 (ii) Submission of proof of successful completion of culturally
21 congruent ancestral practices, training, and education that the
22 secretary must review and determine whether the training and
23 education meet the competency-based requirements;

24 (b) Establish certification and renewal fees, administrative
25 procedures, continuing education, administrative requirements, and
26 forms necessary to implement this chapter in accordance with RCW
27 43.70.250 and 43.70.280;

28 (c) Maintain a record of all applicants and certifications under
29 this chapter; and

30 (d) Hire clerical, administrative, and investigative staff as
31 needed to implement and administer this chapter.

32 (2) All fees collected under this chapter must be credited to the
33 health professions account as required under RCW 43.70.320.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 18.47
35 RCW to read as follows:

36 (1) Subject to amounts appropriated specifically for this
37 purpose, in no case may the secretary:

1 (a) Between July 1, 2025, and July 1, 2030, impose any
2 certification, examination, or renewal fee upon a person seeking
3 certification as a certified doula under this chapter;

4 (b) After July 1, 2030, impose a certification, examination, or
5 renewal fee of more than \$95 upon a person seeking certification as a
6 certified doula under this chapter.

7 (2) All fees under this section shall be fixed by rule adopted by
8 the secretary in accordance with the provisions of the administrative
9 procedure act, chapter 34.05 RCW.

--- **END** ---