



BICULTURAL DOULA TRAINING PROGRAM

Birth for Humankind is recruiting women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities to participate in an 18-week doula training course and join our team as a volunteer bicultural doula.

Who is Birth for Humankind?

We are a not-for-profit organisation based in Melbourne. We provide support and education to women experiencing social and economic disadvantage during pregnancy and birth.

Our Doula Support Program

Through our Doula Support Program, we match referred **clients** with free one-to-one support during pregnancy, birth and early parenting.

We currently have a team of 65+ volunteer doulas. Our doulas come from many different backgrounds. They are health workers, social workers, student midwives, practising or retired midwives and doulas who run their own businesses. All of our doulas undertake 2-day induction training with Birth for Humankind to support their work with women with more complex needs. Our program is run by two Doula Program Supervisors who support our volunteers as they support clients.

What does a volunteer doula do?

Our doulas act as volunteer (unpaid) pregnancy and birth support companions who provide practical and emotional support for our women clients. Our doulas help a woman to:

- Find the information she needs to make important choices during pregnancy and labour
- Make plans for her labour, birth and early parenting
- Prepare herself emotionally and physically for labour
- Communicate her questions and needs to hospital staff

Our doulas do not act as midwife or doctor. They do not perform clinical or medical tasks. They do not make decisions for clients. They do not provide transport, babysitting or material aid for clients.

Our doulas generally provide a pregnant woman with 3 visits before birth, on-call for two weeks before the due date until the birth, attendance at birth, and 2 visits after birth. Meetings can take place at a client's home, or in a public space, such as a local café, community centre or hospital as agreed between client and doula.

Who do our doulas support?

We provide free pregnancy support and education services to pregnant women who are experiencing financial hardship and who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- At risk of perinatal mental health issues
- History of mental health issues
- Under 25 years of age
- Experiencing homelessness
- Newly arrived migrant
- Refugee background or seeking asylum
- Current or historical substance misuse
- Experience of trauma, abuse, family violence
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Lacking a birth support person

POSITION DESCRIPTION

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Bicultural (competent in English and another community language e.g. Arabic, Oromo, Vietnamese, Urdu, Burmese)
- Passionate about supporting pregnant women and new mothers
- An understanding of the role of the doula
- Live in greater Melbourne (we are particularly interested in recruiting women from Western and Northern Melbourne)
- Have (or be willing to undergo) a Working with Children Check
- Be willing to have a National Police Check
- Be willing to commit to full attendance and participation throughout the doula training and certification process
- Flexibility to be on call for labouring women during certification process and as required as a volunteer doula for Birth for Humankind

KEY DATES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Doula Training – April-September 2021**
 - 18-week professional doula training (one 4-hour session per week)
 - Weekly assignments and reading
- 1) **Completion of Doula Certification**
 - Support three women during labour and birth (you will be connected with an experienced doula from Birth for Humankind to support you through this)
 - 2) **Birth for Humankind Doula Induction Weekend – TBC during September 2021**
 - Induction to be part of Birth for Humankind volunteer doula team.



- 3) **Commitment to work as a volunteer (unpaid) doula with Birth for Humankind**
 - Provide doula support to a minimum of three clients over an 18-month period
 - We offer each client the following services:
 - Three antenatal visits
 - On-call availability two weeks before and after estimated due date
 - Two postnatal visits
 - You will receive support in this work from our Doula Program Supervisor and/or a volunteer mentor.

- 4) **Access to professional support to develop your own doula business (optional)**
 - Opportunity to access scholarships to explore developing your own doula business

COST AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT:

- Birth for Humankind is committed to supporting women experiencing financial disadvantage and building a diverse doula workforce including women with lived experience. **If you meet the eligibility requirements but do not have capacity to pay training fees, a range of full and partial scholarships are available.**
- For people not eligible for scholarships, the training cost is \$2000, which includes all training, mentoring, materials and catering during the 18-week training and mentoring period. **Payment plans are also available.**
- Participants who complete their 18-month volunteering commitment with Birth for Humankind will receive **a reimbursement of \$500** of the initial course fee.
- As a volunteer doula with Birth for Humankind, you will be reimbursed to cover costs related to supporting clients.