

Office of the Health Care Advocate (HCA)

Testimony on S. 109



Sam Peisch, MPH
Health Policy Analyst

Tuesday, January 23



HCA Position: Support S. 109



- Strong evidence base for reducing health disparities in maternal and child health outcomes
- Cost-effective
- Safe
- Aligned with Vermont's health reform efforts

Research Snapshot: Cost Effectiveness



- "Based on associations between doula care and preterm and cesarean birth, coverage reimbursement for doula services would likely be cost saving or cost effective for state Medicaid programs." - 2017 scoping review, *Birth*
- "Sensitivity analyses demonstrated a professional doula was potentially cost-saving up to \$884 and cost-effective up to \$1360 per doula...the cost-effectiveness estimate is likely conservative...highlighting the need for higher doula care reimbursement." - 2019 study, *Journal of Midwifery and Womens Health*

Considerations



- Section 2(a)(1): Expand the number of entities that qualify for certification
- Section 2(a)(2): Consider revising current reimbursement amounts upward after reviewing other state plans, relevant literature and updated fiscal note

Shy's Story





Appendix

Table 1. Summary of Medicaid Reimbursement Policies in States Covering Doula Services^{37,38}

State	Prenatal Visit Coverage	Postpartum Visit Coverage	Delivery Coverage	Total Reimbursement
District of Columbia ³⁹	Covers 12 total visits, \$97 per prenatal visit and up to \$291 (maximum of 6 hours at \$49 per hour) for postpartum visit, additional \$100 incentive for timely postpartum visit		Flat rate of \$686	\$1,565 under a scenario with 5 prenatal, delivery attendance, and 6 postpartum visits that last one hour each with incentive payment
Florida ⁴⁰	Number of covered visits varies by plan	Number of covered visits varies by plan	Coverage varies by plan	Varies by Medicaid Managed Care plan, usually \$400 - \$1,110
Maryland ⁴¹	Covers 4 visits, up to \$65 per visit	Covers 4 visits, up to \$79 per visit	Flat rate of \$350	Up to \$930 if all potential visits are reimbursed
Minnesota ⁴²	Covers 6 total visits, \$47 per visit		Flat rate of \$488	Up to \$770 if all potential visits are reimbursed
New Jersey ⁴³	Covers 12 total visits, up to \$66 per visit and \$100 for initial visit, additional \$100 incentive for an initial postpartum visit		Flat rate of \$235	Up to \$1,166 across all visits, up to \$1266 with incentive payment
Nevada ⁴⁴	Covers 4 total visits, \$50 per visit		Flat rate of \$150	Up to \$350 across all visits
Oregon ⁴⁵	Covers 4 total visits, \$50 per visit		Flat rate of \$150	Up to \$350 across all visits
Rhode Island ⁴⁶	Covers 3 visits, \$100 per visit	Covers 3 visits, \$100 per visit	Flat rate of \$900	Up to \$1,500 across all visits
Virginia ⁴⁷	Covers 8 total visits, additional \$100 in incentives available		Covered, unspecified amount	Up to \$859 across all visits, up to \$959 with incentive payments

Note: The table includes the eight states and the District of Columbia actively reimbursing doula services in Medicaid, as of October 16, 2022. Rounded to nearest dollar.



Source: HHS, 2022.

References



- Covering Doula Services Under Medicaid. Center for Health Care Strategies. 2022.
- Sobczak A, Taylor L, Solomon S, Ho J, Kemper S, Phillips B, Jacobson K, Castellano C, Ring A, Castellano B, Jacobs RJ. The Effect of Doulas on Maternal and Birth Outcomes: A Scoping Review. *Cureus*. 2023 May 24;15(5):e39451. doi: 10.7759/cureus.39451. PMID: 37378162; PMCID: PMC10292163.
- Kozhimannil KB, Hardeman RR, Alarid-Escudero F, Vogelsang CA, Blauer-Peterson C, Howell EA. Modeling the Cost-Effectiveness of Doula Care Associated with Reductions in Preterm Birth and Cesarean Delivery. *Birth*. 2016 Mar;43(1):20-7. doi: 10.1111/birt.12218. Epub 2016 Jan 14. PMID: 26762249; PMCID: PMC5544530.
- Greiner KS, Hersh AR, Hersh SR, Remer JM, Gallagher AC, Caughey AB, Tilden EL. The Cost-Effectiveness of Professional Doula Care for a Woman's First Two Births: A Decision Analysis Model. *J Midwifery Womens Health*. 2019 Jul;64(4):410-420. doi: 10.1111/jmwh.12972. Epub 2019 Apr 29. PMID: 31034756.
- Knocke K, Chappel A, Sugar S, De Lew N, Sommers BD. “Doula Care and Maternal Health: An Evidence Review.” Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation: Office of Health Policy. 13 December 2022.