
BOARD OF NURSING

- Requires the Board of Nursing to establish a registry of certified doulas.
- Establishes the Doula Advisory Board within the Board of Nursing.
- Repeals these provisions five years after the bill's effective date.

Doula certification

(R.C. 4723.89 and 4723.90; Section 105.10)

The bill establishes two programs, one in the Department of Medicaid (ODM) and one in the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC), relating to the provision and coverage of doula services. It requires each doula participating in one of those programs to hold a certificate issued by the Ohio Board of Nursing. The bill repeals all of its provisions regarding the doula services five years after its effective date.

Beginning one year after these provisions take effect, the bill prohibits a person from using or assuming the title "certified doula," unless the person holds a certificate issued by the Board of Nursing. In the case of a violation, the bill authorizes the Board to impose a fine after an adjudication held in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (R.C. Chapter 119). It also requires the Attorney General, on the Board's request, to bring and prosecute a civil action to collect any fine imposed that remains unpaid.

Certificate issuance

The bill requires the Board of Nursing to adopt rules, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, establishing standards and procedures for issuing certificates to doulas. The rules must include all of the following:

- Requirements for certification as a doula, including a requirement that a doula either be certified by a doula certification organization or, if not certified, have education and experience that the Board considers appropriate;
- Requirements for renewal of a certificate and continuing education;
- Requirements for training on racial bias, health disparities, and cultural competency as a condition of initial certification and renewal;
- Certificate application and renewal fees, as well as a waiver of fees for applicants with a family income not exceeding 300% of the federal poverty line;
- Requirements and standards of practice for certified doulas;
- The amount of a fine to be imposed for using or assuming the title "certified doula" without holding a Board-issued certificate;
- Any other standards and procedures the Board considers necessary to implement the bill's provisions.

Doula registry

The Board of Nursing must develop and regularly update a registry of doulas holding Board-issued certificates. The Board must make the registry available to the public on its website.

Doula advisory board

The bill creates – while these provisions are effective – a Doula Advisory Board within the Board of Nursing.

Membership

The advisory board consists of at least 13 but not more than 15 members, all appointed by the Board of Nursing. Of these members, at least one must represent the organization Birthing Beautiful Communities and another the organization Restoring Our Own through Transformation.

The overall composition of the advisory board must be as follows:

- At least three members representing communities most impacted by negative maternal and fetal health outcomes;
- At least six members who are doulas with current, valid certification from a doula certification organization;
- At least one member who is a public health official, physician, nurse, or social worker;
- At least one member who is a consumer.

When appointing members to the advisory board, the Board of Nursing must make a good faith effort to select members who represent counties with higher rates of infant and maternal mortality, in particular those counties with the largest disparities. The Board also must give priority to individuals with direct service experience providing care to infants and pregnant and postpartum women.

Terms of membership and vacancies

Of the initial appointments, half are to be appointed to one-year terms and half appointed to two-year terms. Thereafter, all terms are for two years. The bill requires the Board to fill any vacancy as soon as practicable.

Chairperson, meetings, and reimbursements

By a majority vote of a quorum of its members, the advisory board must select, and may replace, a chairperson. The advisory board is required by the bill to meet at the call of the chairperson as often as is necessary for timely completion of board duties. If requested, a member must receive per diem compensation for fulfilling his or her duties as well as reimbursement of actual and necessary expenses incurred.

The Board of Nursing is responsible for providing meeting space, staff services, and other technical assistance to the advisory board.

Advisory board duties

The bill requires the advisory board to do all of the following:

- Provide general advice, guidance, and recommendations to the Board of Nursing regarding doula certification and the adoption of rules;
- Provide general advice, guidance, and recommendations to ODM regarding its doula program;
- Make recommendations to the Medicaid Director regarding the adoption of rules governing its program.

Definitions

- **Doula** is defined as a trained, nonmedical professional who provides continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to a pregnant woman during the antepartum, intrapartum, or postpartum periods, regardless of whether the woman's pregnancy results in a live birth.
- **Doula certification organization** is an organization that is recognized at an international, national, state, or local level for training and certifying doulas and includes any of the following: Birthing Beautiful Communities, Restoring Our Own through Transformation, The International Childbirth Education Association, DONA International, Birthworks International, Childbirth and Postpartum Professional Association, Childbirth International, Commonsense Childbirth Inc., and any other recognized organization the Board of Nursing considers appropriate.