



**Virginia Doula Task Force
November 16, 2021
10:00am-12:30pm**

**(In-Person Meeting)
Henrico County Public Libraries
Fairfield Area Public Library – Large Meeting Room
1401 N. Laburnum Avenue
Henrico, VA 23223
(804) 501-1930
<https://goo.gl/maps/RDWpFdf4ipK2>**

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Kenda Sutton-El, Stephanie Spencer, Lashrecse Aird, Lauren Elise Barnes, Tara Daystar, Kayley Mayhew, Tammi McKinley, Alison Hicks, Cartier Smith (DMAS, designee), and Dr. Frances Casey, Jennifer Macdonald (VDH, ex officio)

Not Present: Lisa Brown, Dr. Donald Dudley, Isabel Eljaiek, Lora Henderson, Erika Schmale, Kathy Stewart

VDH Staff Present: Consuelo Staton, Emily Yeatts, Kimani Burney

1. **Call to order** – Kenda Sutton-El called meeting to order at 10:26am
2. **Roll call** – Consuelo Staton issued the roll call.
3. **Vote on Minutes: September 2, September 28, October 5 and October 21, 2021**
 - Minutes: Move to adopt the minutes in block as presented for September 2, September 28, October 5, October 21.
 - Nine (9) members voted. All in favor- none opposed.
 - Documents still in the review process and do not need to be voted upon:
 - Bylaws
 - Doula Certification Application
4. The Chair Sutton-El and Co-chair Spencer presented Del. Aird with flowers and an honorary doula backpack in recognition of all her efforts in championing the doula services in the legislature.

5. Task Force Resignations

The task force has received two resignations from current members stating scheduling conflicts. Recommendations will be made to fill those positions.

- Isabel Eljaiek, Doula Consumer
- Kathy Stewart of ABP Doula Training Center

6. Open issues – Topic for discussion- Kenda Sutton-El, Stephanie Spencer

Communication Plan Follow-up- Promotion and public awareness

Discussion: “Virginia Is For Doulas” icon that will point back to the Task Force; easily identifiable. Icons of a heart or baby feet will be used as the “o” of doulas and be used interchangeably.

Communications discussion group had meeting on 11/9/21 and all were in favor of it. Next steps in the process will be approval of VDH, DMAS and then by Virginia Tourism.

Comments/Concerns: The icon with the heart seems more familiar in state recognition and association with Virginia. Using both icons/representative icon interchangeably may be confusing. It must be understood that the icons are associated with the same project. The icon with the heart, or baby feet in the shape of a heart, or the red heart with baby feet are the most recommended options. May also need to think about not using the baby feet due to unexpected birth outcomes. Ideal to convey a message that the state and force are unified, so it would be best for everyone to use one image.

Alternate icon image- two shaking hands to represent partnership, but would be confusing, as there are multiple organizations that already use “helping hands” icon.

On pregnancy loss- the baby feet should not be seen as offensive. Even women whom experience infant loss still receive prints of baby feet.

Discussion: Purpose is to have an umbrella reference guide for state agencies, committees, Task Force members, and advocates working simultaneously.

Comments/Concerns: Delegate Aird feels that there should not be a firewall from blocking the public from having conversations about Doulas in Virginia, and it is bizarre to think that the public must interact with a government website, the Town Hall website, to learn more about processes and information.

There is a Facebook page that has been created as a shared space for doulas around the state, but responses are often done in a way that directs folks to the Town Hall page. It is a barrier to communication because the Town Hall page is not easily accessible/easy to navigate. There needs to be a static website created with updated information and links regarding the reimbursement and info on the task force.

Clarification: The Task Force exists solely to make recommendations to VDH's Health Commissioner

Recommendations for the Commissioner:

- Recommend that VDH & DMAS will serve as a members of the executive board of an independently-created doula association in order to support the association's efforts, expand the Doula Workforce, and promote community engagement.

Summary of next steps:

"VA is for Doulas" landing campaign page will be created to disseminate general information about the Medicaid reimbursement, link to other official documents, link to Town Hall, link to FAQs, link to application and have a link to record responses on doulas who may want to join the association. A Task Force member will set it up independently of the Task Force.

Additionally, the conversation about the VA Doula Association will need to move outside of the Doula Taskforce as it will be created and run independently of the Doula Task Force.

Next steps- Forming committees/discussion groups and scheduling quarterly Virginia Doula Task Force meetings.

Discussion: Communications Committee/Discussion Group (already exists)

Continuing Education Discussion Group- Stephanie Spencer will lead. Interested people are welcome to serve.

Role of the committees/discussion groups:

- Will make recommendations on educational opportunities and necessities. Doulas will need to add additional 15 hours of education/training to their certifications every two years.
- Recommend training entities that can train on additional training and education needed for doulas that want to become state certified

Scheduling quarterly meetings 2022

The Task force quarterly meetings have been set for 2022. Here the dates for the second Tuesday of the quarter.

January 11, 2022	11am-1:30pm
April 12, 2022	11am-1:30pm
July 12, 2022	11am-1:30pm
October 11, 2022	11am-1:30pm

7. Discussion on Provider document mock up on Dos and Don'ts of Doulas & Medicaid reimbursement information created by Dr. Casey

- Should say "STATE" Certified Doula Services according to other official documents

8. Consuelo give an update on the status of VDH Regulations and Certifications, the DMAS Doula Medicaid Benefits CMS submission status, and clarification regarding the Doula Task Force voting.
 - The Governor's office approved the final regulation on November 9, 2021, and the regulation has now been submitted to the registrar and will be published on December 6, 2021 for a 30-day public comment period, January 5, 2022. The Effective date will be January 6, 2022.
 - DMAS received the federal CMS SPA approval on October 28, 2021 for community doula services. Virginia will be officially the fourth state to offer these services. Effective date: January 1, 2022.
9. **Public Comment Period – 2 minute maximum time per public commenter- No commenters**
10. **Next Steps:**
 - At the next meeting, task force will vote on amending the bylaws to allow voting members who are unable to attend an in-person meeting to send a designee to vote in their place.
11. **Adjournment – Kenda Sutton-El at 12:30pm.**