



ABOUT US

The [National Doula Certification Board](#) (NDCB) was established in 2022 and received accreditation from the [ANSI National Accreditation Board](#) (ANAB) in 2024. (The same organization that accredits the [Healthy Children Project, Inc.](#) DBA Academy of Lactation Policy and Practice). The NDCB has been attending industry events since its inception.

The Board makeup is required by ANAB to include at least one representative from all interested party groups including doulas, direct consumers of doula services, other health team member types, and community members. The board is comprised of all volunteer members, and the NDCB is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

The NDCB's mission is to set the standard for the professional practice, training, and learning outcomes for the doula profession. It also encourages the education and practice of doulas nationwide, aiming to form a bridge between families and doulas to demonstrate that full-spectrum care before, during, and after birth is essential.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE NATIONAL DOULA CERTIFICATION BOARD?

The National Doula Certification Board was created to provide an option for a third-party certification for doulas. Prior to the formation of the NDCB, all available doula trainings were self-certified, meaning that each training organization set their own requirements and awarded certificates of completion for participants that successfully completed those requirements.

A certificate is a credential – not a license - that confirms that someone completed a specific course or program of study (a sequence of courses). Certificates are usually awarded by educational or training institutions, and they are used to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a particular subject area.

In comparison, certification is a process by which you verify that someone has the required skills, knowledge and ability to perform a specific job. It involves meeting specific requirements, such as completing a certain amount of education or training, passing an exam, and meeting ongoing continuing education requirements. It is usually granted by a professional association, board or organization. (source: online.stanford.edu)

Having a third-party certification provides protection to doulas, birthers, and all interested parties in doula care. It helps to ensure quality and competence in the identified skills, knowledge, and tasks (Core Competencies). It provides a basic job definition and informs a Scope of Practice for the profession. These identifications help protect both doulas and birthers and provide a basis for education to the public on what doula care represents.



WHAT THE NATIONAL DOULA CERTIFICATION BOARD DOES

The NDCB has specific duties and responsibilities pertaining to board activity and does not participate in any training activities. The NDCB is responsible for and retains authority for granting, maintaining, recertifying, expanding, and reducing the scope of certification under the Certified Professional Doula (CPD) credential. This is one kind of doula credential and does not apply to or affect doulas who have other types of certificates or training.

The NDCB values the vast paths of learning, training, and experiences represented in the doula profession. We recognize that doulas represent a wide range of individuals and that many doulas are not interested in seeking a certification of this kind. For those who do wish to have this as a part of their practice, the NDCB offers two distinct pathways toward certification. These paths are explained in detail on the website: doulaboard.org

Upon completion of either pathway, doulas can take the Board exam that completes the initial CPD credential process. As mentioned above, certification, as opposed to a certificate program, requires ongoing education and experience to ensure that certified doulas remain current in their knowledge and skills. Certified Professional Doulas can recertify every three years by showing competency and knowledge of current research, trends, and recommendation changes through organizations like the American Academy of Pediatrics and documenting CEU type credits from any trainings they participated in over that three years.

A CPD credential is nationally recognized and can be used by individuals of any race or background. We are committed to ensuring that our certification process is unbiased and inclusive for everyone.

PATH TO ANSI ACCREDITATION

The [American National Standards Institute](http://AmericanNationalStandardsInstitute) is the largest multi-disciplinary accreditation body in the western hemisphere and exists to credential personnel certification bodies under an appropriate ISO standard. It requires rigorous and detailed adherence to standards of professionalism, non-discrimination, impartiality, and standardized policies and business practices. They also require an initial, thorough Job Task Analysis (conducted through a national survey) that identifies the appropriate skills, knowledge, and tasks that should be represented by professionals in the specific job or role (in this case, doulas). The creation of a certification exam also follows a meticulous, ordered process including piloting, validation, and reliability studies. The purpose of the exam is to test for the skills and knowledge of the profession, not for knowledge of a specific curriculum, or training program. All efforts of bodies seeking



accreditation are audited fully by a team and accreditation is only accomplished through recommendation of the auditing team, and votes from two separate ANSI boards.

The National Doula Certification Board successfully completed its accreditation in 2024, and will continue to be audited regularly by ANSI for as long as the NDCB desires this accreditation.

IS THE CPD CREDENTIAL A LICENSE?

The Certified Professional Doula credential is not a license, nor does it pertain to any state or federal regulatory board. The NDCB is not affiliated with any government or related organization.

WHAT ARE THE ASSOCIATED FEES?

Fees for the initial application, exam, retakes and recertifications are listed on our website: doulaboard.org and go toward general operating and examination-related expenses. There is no membership fee required.

HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED

The doula profession and the landscape in which doulas practice is constantly changing. The NDCB is always looking for individuals who align with our mission and vision and would like to serve in some capacity. Community involvement increases our ability to understand and serve doulas, birthers, families, and other interested parties. Please contact us for more information: info@doulaboard.org.