

By Senator Osgood

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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to doula workforce development;
creating s. 445.0075, F.S.; providing legislative
findings and intent; defining terms; establishing the
Doula Workforce Development Support Program within the
Department of Commerce to provide grants and technical
assistance to eligible doula training entities for a
specified purpose; requiring the department to
prioritize support to high-need regions; providing for
the grant of awards under the program; specifying
authorized uses of the grant funds; prohibiting the
department from using the funds for specified
purposes; requiring the department to adopt rules for
the administration of the program; requiring the
department to consider specified factors in developing
grant criteria; requiring the department to submit
annual reports to the Governor and the Legislature by
a specified date; providing requirements for the
report; authorizing the department to require grant
recipients to submit certain data; authorizing the
department to adopt rules; providing an appropriation;
providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 445.0075, Florida Statutes, is created
to read:

445.0075 Doula Workforce Development Support Program.—

(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

32-01247-26

20261456__

(a) The Legislature finds that:

1. This state continues to experience persistent maternal morbidity and mortality disparities that disproportionately affect Black, Brown, rural, and low-income communities.

2. Doulas have been shown to improve maternal and infant health outcomes, reduce preventable complications, increase prenatal care engagement, and strengthen postpartum recovery.

3. Existing doula training organizations, community-based doula programs, nonprofit entities, and private educational institutions serve a critical role in building a maternal health workforce but are under-resourced.

4. Supporting these entities through the state's workforce development infrastructure is essential to meeting regional maternal health needs, especially in urban high-disparity counties, rural maternity-care deserts, and regions experiencing hospital closures or obstetric service reductions.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature to strengthen the state's doula workforce by supporting the organizations that train, mentor, and deploy doulas, and to expand economic and small-business opportunities for community-based birth workers through the Department of Commerce.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

(a) "Department" means the Department of Commerce.

(b) "Doula" means a nonmedical birth support professional trained to give physical and emotional support during childbirth.

(c) "Doula training entity" means a nonprofit organization, community-based program, training collective, academic institution, or private educational provider that conducts doula

32-01247-26

20261456__

training, mentoring, continuing education, or workforce placement activities.

(d) "Doula workforce support services" means instructor compensation, curriculum development, program expansion, administrative support, business development training for doulas, mentoring, apprenticeship structures, evaluation and data activities, and related capacity-building functions.

(e) "High-need region" means a county or region identified by the department as having elevated maternal morbidity rates, limited numbers of maternity care providers, or insufficient doula availability.

(3) PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT.—

(a) The Doula Workforce Development Support Program is established within the department to provide grants and technical assistance to eligible doula training entities for the purpose of expanding the state's doula workforce.

(b) The program shall prioritize support for entities serving high-need regions, including:

1. Urban counties with high maternal morbidity disparities.
2. Rural areas with limited or no obstetric providers or maternity wards.
3. Communities affected by recent hospital closures or reductions in maternity services.

(4) GRANTS; ELIGIBILITY; USE OF FUNDS.—

(a) The department may award competitive or formula-based grants to eligible doula training entities to support doula workforce development.

(b) Grant funds may be used for any of the following:

1. Training, mentoring, or apprenticeship program

32-01247-26

20261456__

88 expansion.

89 2. Instructor compensation and curriculum modernization.

90 3. Recruitment and support of trainees from high-need
91 regions.

92 4. Program administration, evaluation, and outreach.

93 5. Business development training for doulas, including
94 assistance with incorporation, insurance, marketing, and
95 entrepreneurship.

96 6. Stipends or workforce support for newly trained doulas,
97 administered through the eligible entity.

98 7. Partnership development with hospitals, Medicaid managed
99 care plans, clinics, community health workers, Healthy Start
100 coalitions, or other maternal health service providers.

101 (c) The department may not use funds to directly recruit,
102 hire, or employ doulas as state employees or contractors
103 providing clinical services.

104 (5) PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.—

105 (a) The department shall establish by rule application
106 procedures, grant criteria, allowable costs, reporting
107 requirements, and monitoring processes.

108 (b) In developing grant criteria, the department shall
109 consider all of the following:

110 1. The demonstrated capacity of the entity to train or
111 mentor doulas.

112 2. The geographic areas served and the documented need for
113 doula workforce expansion.

114 3. The entity's experience serving culturally diverse and
115 high-disparity populations.

116 4. Partnerships with local workforce development boards or

32-01247-26

20261456__

educational institutions.

5. Plans for sustainability and long-term workforce placement.

(6) REPORTING.—

(a) By December 1 of each year, the department shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives summarizing all of the following:

1. Grant recipients and award amounts.

2. The number of doulas trained, mentored, or supported by funded entities.

3. The geographic distribution of program activities.

4. Workforce outcomes, including business development successes and job placements.

5. Recommendations for program improvements.

(b) The department may require grant recipients to submit data necessary to compile the report.

(7) RULES.—The department may adopt rules necessary to implement this section.

Section 2. (1) For the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the nonrecurring sum of \$7.5 million from the General Revenue Fund is appropriated to the Department of Commerce to implement s. 445.0075, Florida Statutes, relating to the Doula Workforce Development Support Program.

(2) From the funds appropriated in subsection (1):

(a) Up to \$500,000 may be used by the department for administrative expenses, program management, technical assistance to grantees, and data collection and evaluation activities necessary to carry out the program.

32-01247-26

20261456__

146 (b) The remaining funds shall be placed in a Grants and
147 Aids - Doula Workforce Development Support Program category and
148 distributed as competitive or formula-based grants to eligible
149 doula training entities in accordance with s. 445.0075, Florida
150 Statutes, with priority given to entities serving high-need
151 regions as defined in that section.

152 (3) Funds appropriated in this section which are not
153 encumbered by June 30, 2027, shall revert to the General Revenue
154 Fund.

155 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.