



**Indigenous Birth Helpers
Request For Proposal
August 2023**

The Alaska Native Birthworkers Community seeks proposals to provide Indigenous Birth Helper services in Anchorage.

Organization Overview:

The Alaska Native Birthworkers Community (ANBC) is a community based organization whose mission is to serve Native birthing families so that they feel supported, well cared for, and full of the information they need to make confident choices around reproductive health, birthing, and parenthood. In doing this, we seek to reclaim as well as create new ceremony to heal our ancestors, ourselves, and future generations who may have been harmed through the colonization of our bodies, healthcare, and birthing practices.

Services Description:

ANBC is requesting proposals from Indigenous Birth Helpers to whom we can refer families seeking peer, non-clinical, support during pregnancy, birth and postpartum. This direct service includes attending births at unpredictable times, being on call, offering 1 on 1 support as well as participating in ANBC team and community events and learning opportunities related to healthy pregnancy, childbirth preparation, postpartum care, lactation and newborn care, coming-of-age, birthworker networking and support, and traditional knowledge and skills. There will also be opportunities for continuing education, community outreach and organizing.

Indigenous Birth Helpers are independent contractors who provide no-cost services to eligible Alaska Native and Indigenous birthing persons referred by ANBC and can request reimbursement through ANBC for these services through the Doula Care Reimbursement Program.

The Indigenous Birth Helper, also known as a doula, a birth companion or labor support person, is someone who provides continuous physical, emotional, spiritual, and informational support to a birthing person before, during, and after childbirth. This is a valuable role within a birth team, which may also include the non-pregnant parent, other family and community members, nurse or birth assistant, midwife, and/or doctor.

Responsibilities:

- Provide prenatal support by offering information and resources to help prepare for birth, postpartum, parenting
- Provide one-to-one support during labor as a continuous supportive presence: help to create a comfortable environment, provide reassurance, support birthing person's decisions, center birthing person's cultural practices, help with comfort techniques, share support to entire family
- Help with lactation and postpartum support
- Offer peer support to help process experiences, fears, and opportunities for healing
- Maintain ethical practice and confidentiality

- What the Indigenous Birth Helper does NOT do: perform any clinical tasks; make any decisions or medical recommendations for the birthing person or make plans of care with clinical staff on their behalf; access the birthing person's private health information

Requirements:

- Demonstrated commitment to serving Native communities
- Understanding and respect of Alaska Native cultures, peoples, regions, and traditional values
- Ability to offer culturally matched care with Native birthing families
- Ability to offer non-judgmental and culturally safe care and uphold ANBC's code of ethics, protocols and confidentiality requirements
- Experience with deep, active listening, and willingness to center and support the requests and preferences of the birthing person
- Knowledge of, or willingness to learn: basics of childbirth education, labor support and comfort measures, informed consent, postpartum and breast/chestfeeding care, newborn development
- Availability for on-call work
 - *Call days are 24-hour periods where you may be requested to support someone, with an expectation that you are ready to be at the birth facility within 60 minutes of being called, including during the night, and remain with them until after the baby is born.*
- Self-directed, ability to organize tasks to complete deliverables without daily supervision
- Excellent communication and collaborative approach to team work using a trust and consensus based leadership model
- Strict adherence to COVID-19 and other safety protocols and infection control standards as defined by ANBC and partner institutions

Desired Qualifications:

- Doula / childbirth educator / breast/chestfeeding counselor training and/or other experience surrounding labor and birth education and support
- Physical ability to sometimes lift up to 50 pounds, stand and sit as needed in support of a birthing person, and commit to sometimes long hours of emotional and physical support
- Awareness of how to safely work within hospital and community birthing environments

To Apply:

Please submit a cover letter of no more than two pages describing your community background, your demonstrated commitment to serving Native peoples, qualifications, and passion for this work, a resume, and two references to nativebirthworker@gmail.com. This RFP is open until services are secured.

The Alaska Native Birthworkers Community is especially interested in contractors who have experience living in and/or working with Alaska Native communities, and Alaska Native people are strongly encouraged to apply.

To learn more about ANBC please visit www.nativebirthworkers.org or email nativebirthworker@gmail.com with any questions. ANBC is a project of [Alaska Venture Fund](#), fiscally sponsored by the New Venture Fund.