

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL DOULA™



NATIONAL DOULA CERTIFICATION BOARD HANDBOOK

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Composition, Roles, Responsibilities, & Processes

The National Doula Certification Board (NDCB) exists as a private entity 501C-6 corporation. The NDCB has specific duties and responsibilities pertaining to Board activity and does not participate in any training activities.

The National Doula Certification Board is solely responsible and retains authority for all decisions related to certification, including authority for granting, maintaining, recertifying, expanding, and reducing the scope of certification and suspending or withdrawing certification. Board members will possess the knowledge, experience, and expertise that align with the mission and responsibilities of the NDCB.

The NDCB is comprised of a group of subject matter experts (including but not limited to; doulas, medical professionals, consumers of doula services, and education professionals) with sufficient competence to complete all functions of the NDCB. Resumes and applications on file for all NDCB personnel.

Purpose: To create a standard of professionalism, preparedness, knowledge, and skill for doulas and establish a national certification process that can be used with confidence by any interested party as a measure of an individual's qualification to practice as a doula.

Responsibilities include:

- Participating in NDCB meetings and serving on panels and/or in roles as requested by the Chair and NDCB staff.
- Retaining authority and/or assigning such authority to appropriate panels for decisions on certification and recertification, including approving the scheme elements and process requirements, approving the examination forms, pass/fail standards, and other essential certification decisions based upon its own determination or upon recommendations from ad hoc panels that it appoints and from NDCB staff.
- Monitoring exam performance.
- Giving due consideration to complaints against certificants.
- Serving as a sounding board for and responding to concerns and recommendations by interested parties.

This NDCB is also responsible for reviewing the information submitted by a certified person seeking recertification. This includes evaluation of continuing education courses as part of the recertification application. The NDCB holds the authority for both certification and recertification.

The NDCB may outsource work (including but not limited to proctoring, credential management, and aspects of operations, and will maintain full responsibility for all outsourced work. NDCB takes full responsibility and monitors contractor performance through the contractor checklist. This process is completed during the annual audit using the contractor evaluation checklist.

Specific Areas of Responsibility details are listed in Appendix A.

Mission: To set the standard for the professional practice, training and learning outcomes for the doula profession.

General Expectations of the Certification Board

Best Practices – Leverage research to learn, share and implement best practices.

Board Composition – Ensure the Board has the diversity of skill, expertise, knowledge, and representation to support the work of the Board, including the certification process.

Board Meetings – Ensure Board meeting agendas are structured to support robust discussion and review.

Board Accountability – Conduct routine (annual) Board assessments and performance reviews to hold Board members accountable, track Board performance, and identify Board development needs.

Board Leadership – Board Chair to engage in regular conversations with the Program Director, Clinical Director, and other interested parties.

Board Engagement – Participate in continuing Board educational programs – at least one per year.

Board Structure – Ensure Board is tasked appropriately to carry out the Mission of the National Doula Certification Board and its work.

Board Culture – Foster an environment where people are recognized for carrying out the Mission of the Board, acting within the core values of the organization, and setting the professional standards of doula practice.

Board Impartiality – Board does not discriminate, nor unfairly impede or inhibit access on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, creed, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or military status in any of its activities or operations. The Board applies their policies and procedures fairly among all applicants, candidates and certified persons and takes steps to act impartial.

Board Evaluation – Board will perform an evaluation annually. Please see Appendix F for evaluation.

Role of Board Members

- Ambassador of professional standards of doula practice
- Decision-maker (decisions are based solely on successful completion of all requirements)

- Foster relationships with doula training organizations who are working to set the professional standards of doula practice like the NDCB
- Conduct Management Reviews to evaluate the overall performance and effectiveness of the organization's management, operations, and strategic initiatives.

Board Commitments

- Be actively involved in the certification process including application reviews
- Attend NDCB meetings
- Remain impartial
- Maintain confidentiality
- Interested Parties are defined as, doulas, medical care team members, consumers of doula services, higher education, employers, insurers, researchers, other facility personnel such as hospital or birth center staff

Board Expectations

- Participate actively in certification and recertification processes
- Participate actively in discussions with training programs and other interested parties such as healthcare professionals and facilities personnel
- Seek out and participate in opportunities to improve aspects of the NDCB
- Regularly attend NDCB meetings, coming prepared, in advance, and starting on time, and reviewing meeting minutes and information when absent.
- Contribute expertise, skills, and knowledge (speak up)
- Understand and differentiate when input is sought versus when a decision must be made

Board Independence

When acting on behalf of the National Doula Certification Board, members must avoid self-interest, conflict of interest, or issues of impartiality and recuse themselves from discussing or voting on matters where there is a possible conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest. For example, if a Board member is related to an applicant, the Board member must recuse themselves from application review or recertification. Conflict of Commitment and Interest disclosures will be required annually of each NDCB member.

Board Appointments

Serving as a NDCB member is a big commitment, and we could not influence the elevation of the doula profession without this commitment. Board members are an extension of the team and keep the organization accountable to the Mission, Vision and Values.

Board members are appointed for an initial term of two (2) years and may be re-appointed for three (3) additional two-year terms not to exceed a total of six (6) consecutive years. The National Doula Certification Board appoints and may remove Board members at its discretion. Please see Appendix G on Board appointments.

The initial inception of the NDCB will require staggered appointment terms so that not all Board members rotate off at the same time and some consistency in operations remains.

Board Composition

Board Size – The National Doula Certification Board may have a minimum of three voting members.

Designated Board Seats – Board members come from recommendations by the Board members, interested parties, and staff members.

Certification Director – The Certification Director shall be responsible for assuring the NDCB has a well-developed philosophy and principles related to the work of the Board and the organization. The Director will also ensure the appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the effective management of the Board.

Clinical Expert – The Clinical Expert shall be responsible for providing clinical knowledge, expectations and understanding to the student oversight review and process.

Secretary – The Secretary will be responsible for keeping all meeting minutes, documents and files as well as serving as the Historian.

Treasurer – The Treasurer will be responsible for overseeing all budget and financial activities of the NDCB.

Community Member(s) – The Community Member(s) shall be responsible for participating in aspects of NDCB operations.

Board responsibilities are spelled out in detail under Appendix A: Areas of Responsibility.

Board job descriptions are spelled out in more detail under Appendix C: Board Job Descriptions.

Meetings and Quorum – The Board shall meet at least annually but may meet more frequently if needed to carry out its responsibilities.

Notice of meetings shall be given to all Board members at a minimum of one week prior. Meetings may be held by means of conference telephone, virtual, and/or in-person. A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. The act of a majority of the Board members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the NDCB. The NDCB will maintain minutes of meetings.

Voting – For voting at a meeting or via electronic means, the participation of at least 75% of the voting members of the NDCB shall constitute a quorum, and approval by at least 75% of present voters shall constitute an actionable decision. The voting results shall be recorded and kept on file according to NDCB's records management procedures.

Certification Board Volunteer Agreement - NDCB members shall sign a Volunteer Agreement covering confidentiality and security of information and assurance of

impartiality prior to accepting their positions.

Board Committees – Board Committees are comprised of individuals who possess the appropriate competencies necessary for the responsibilities charged to each committee. All committees shall strictly adhere to the Board Independence statement as it pertains to committee activities.

Committee Volunteer Agreement – Committee members shall sign the Volunteer Agreement, which may be specific to their roles, covering at minimum, confidentiality and security of information and assurance of impartiality prior to accepting their positions.

| Committees | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| | Governance | Quality | Appeals and Complaints | Company Audit | Exam Audit |
| Delegated Authority | Recommending authority only | Recommending authority only | Decision making authority | Recommending authority only | Recommending authority only |
| Committee Membership and Size | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board member (majority) Subject matter experts allowed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board member (majority) Subject matter experts allowed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board member (majority) Subject matter experts allowed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board member (majority) Subject matter experts allowed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board member (majority) Subject matter experts allowed |
| Terms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 year, renewable annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 year, renewable annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 year, renewable annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 year, renewable annually |
| Staffing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Expert | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Expert as needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD Clinical Expert as needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Expert as needed |
| Ex-officio | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Chair shall serve as ex-officio on all committees | | | | |
| Appointment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Chair, with input Board members, shall appoint the committee chairs The Committee may recommend external (non-board members) committee members for the board's consideration. The board shall appoint non-board members for committee appointment by slate voting process with the exception of Appeals and Complaints Committee, which is formed as complaints or appeals are submitted (reference pp 8 & 9). | | | | |
| Minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes shall be provided to the full board in a timely manner. The approved minutes shall be forwarded to the board for review and discussion. Minutes for Appeals are not taken, rather documentation will be on file for any complaint or appeal investigated. | | | | |
| Meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board shall meet as needed. The Board Chair shall determine the frequency of meetings. Meeting dates and times should be specified a year in advance with the exception of Appeals Committee due to the nature of the work. | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee shall meet beginning in quarter four of each calendar fiscal year. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee shall meet beginning in quarter four of each calendar fiscal year. |
| Agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The executive officer staffing the Board shall prepare the agenda with input from the Committee Chair. | | | | |
| Access to Information and Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board has access to information and staff to help them govern, but individual members may not direct activity to staff. | | | | |

The initial NDCB members were formed from review of application and resumes by the Board Chair with input from community members within the doula practice space. Appointed members were determined to have the necessary qualifications to carry out the duties of the board, including certification and recertification. Members were chosen for their diversity of skill sets, knowledge and experience. Including but not limited to: business organization, medical credentials, previous board experience and knowledge of credentialing processes and understanding of the scope of doula practice. The Board Chair was self-appointed in the creation of this entity. Board Chair application, resume and qualifications exist with all other Board member documentation.

Governance Committee – Areas of Responsibility:

- Best Practices: Ensure content reflects current evidence-based practices, research, and legislative/regulatory updates.
- Board/Organizational Composition: Ensure the Board has the diversity of skill, expertise, knowledge, and community representation to support the work of the Board. Review resume and application of Board candidates to ensure appropriate capabilities, fit, and placement. Make recommendation to full Board for official vote. Make recommendations regarding any necessary changes to organizational structure.
- Board Accountability: Ensure Board members have appropriate attendance and contribution to the meetings and the Board work. Take appropriate action if failing to attend or contribute to the responsibilities of the Board.
- Board Structure: Ensure Board committees are tasked appropriately to carry out the Mission of the National Doula Certification Board and the work of the NDCB.
- Board Culture: Ensure the Board members are setting the right tone, fostering an environment where individuals are celebrated for living out the Mission of the National Doula Certification Board and acting within the Core Values.
- See Appendix H for Board Membership Process.

Quality Committee – Areas of Responsibility

- Policies, Procedures and Processes: Recommend to the full Board, the policies, procedures, and processes related to the quality clinical aspects of the program. Review and approve clinical processes, checkpoints, and guardrails.
- Requirements: Oversee clinical compliance with medical facilities for quality, safety, and learning.

CPD Appeals and Complaints Committee – Areas of Responsibility

- Hearing and making determinations on appeals submitted by NDCB certification applicants, candidates, or certificants.

The Appeals Committee shall be formed at the discretion of the NDCB chairperson and members will be determined by the nature of the appeal and shall not include persons involved in the initial decision being appealed. Each appeals committee will be formed on an as-needed basis, and only for the duration of the appeal.

Process: Upon receipt of the appeal, the Appeals Committee shall review the appeal within 10 days and if the matter can be handled, a decision will be made, and the

appellant will be informed. If the Appeal Committee decides they need more information and want to meet in person with the appellant, they will contact the appellant to set up a time and place for that meeting. Upon the conclusion of that meeting, the Appeals Committee will discuss any new information they received and arrive at a decision within three (3) business days and the appellant will be informed by email immediately of the final decision.

The final decision of the Appeals Committee cannot be contested.

Appeals and complaints are kept confidential, and no discriminatory action will be taken against the appellant.

Company Audit Committee – Areas of Responsibility

- Review the organization's financial and tax status, internal controls, risk management, compliance procedures, website and any outsourced contracts.
- Ensure the NDCB is fulfilling its mission and achieving long-term viability.

The Company Audit Committee must meet annually, beginning the first week of August, to begin the review of the organization's information and performance.

Exam Audit Committee – Areas of Responsibility

- Ensure no items in the test bank are expired or contain out of date information based on changes in regulation, legislation, accepted best practices, or the most current Job Task Analysis.
- Development and maintenance of the certification schemes as well as assessment of activities.

The Exam Audit will take place the first week of August annually and will follow the methodology set forth with the initial item analysis and pilot testing as is detailed in the Item Analysis and Validation Study document.

Document Management and Security Measures

The National Doula Certification Board is committed to best practices for maintaining a secure, organized document management system.

- Board members involved in the certification and recertification process must review the Board Independence statement and follow the documented guidelines if they exist.
- Internally created documents that contain information for the NDCB or direct communication to other entities are stored in a protected electronic file accessible only by the Chair of the NDCB who has the authority to control version updates and distribution.
- Documents submitted by applicants and candidates for certification or by certified persons seeking recertification are housed in a credential management software solution, which is a contracted entity. These documents include applications, supporting documents, certificates, etc.
- Each applicant/candidate has a designated file for the retention of all submitted materials required for the certification and/or recertification process.

- Files are considered active as long as the candidate/certified person is actively involved in the certification or recertification process.
- Records for each individual are maintained as active until one year past lapse in certification, at which time the appropriate record retention technology will destroy the documents within the file.
- All materials associated with the certification process – exams, answer keys, forms, rubrics, and checklists are held with the contracted credential management software solution organization.
- In case of a security breach, the Chair in conjunction with the contracted credential management software solution organization will notify any impacted individuals.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENT RELATED ISSUES

- Applications for Certification and Recertification, together with supporting documentation are evaluated against the published requirements. Incomplete applications or those with inadequate support materials will not be processed.
- The NDCB is responsible for notifying applicants and candidates when assessment of their application is complete.

Appendix A: Areas of Responsibility – Certification Process

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Decision on Certification

1. The decision on Certification is determined by candidates' successful completion of all required elements of the application.
2. Candidates' successful completion of the CPD Certification Exam.
3. When A board member applies for certification or recertification the process requirements remain the same and non-subjective. Another board member with no connection or relationship with the applicant may review the documents for recertification. The board member will have no involvement in their own recertification process. Board members involved in the review of documentation for the certification process shall reference the Board Independence statement and maintain strict adherence.

An application would need to be submitted showing evidence of the following:

1. Completion of a training pathway
 - a. Pathway 1: Pre-approved Training Program Pathway
Completed training from a pre-approved training organization meeting the following requirement:
 - must include assessments (both performance and response)
 - must be at least 200 hours in length
 - 55 hours of clinical experience in a medical facility with a qualified healthcare provider (RN, BSN, CPM, CNM, OBGYN) as preceptor including 5 live births
 - Postpartum support (in home) 20 hours
 - Must include the following topics:
 - Prenatal/pregnancy support
 - Fertility/Infertility
 - Labor support
 - Postpartum support
 - End of life support
 - Business
 - Infant Feeding
 - Maternal Mental Health (basics)
 - Newborn care
 - Newborn and Infant development
 - Diversity and Cultural sensitivity
 - HIPAA/ Confidentiality/Privacy
 - Universal Precautions/Bloodborne Pathogens
 - Burnout Prevention and Self-Care
 - Personal Safety & Situational Awareness

b. Pathway 2: Prior Learning/Individual Learning Pathway

Part 1-Training Requirements: The individual must complete a minimum of combined 200hrs of training (with proof of completion, within 4 years) in at least the following topic areas:

- Prenatal/pregnancy support
- Fertility/Infertility
- Labor support
- Postpartum support
- End of life support
- Business
- Infant Feeding
- Maternal Mental Health (basics)
- Newborn care
- Newborn and Infant development
- Diversity and Cultural sensitivity
- HIPAA/ Confidentiality/Privacy
- Burnout Prevention and Self-Care
- Personal Safety & Situational Awareness

Part 2 - Clinical experience requirements: The individual must complete a minimum of 75 contact hours of hands-on experience. The experience must include:

- 55 hours of clinical experience in a medical facility with a qualified healthcare provider (RN, BSN, CPM, CNM, OBGYN) as preceptor including 5 live births
- Postpartum support (in home) 20 hours
- Adherence to medical protocols (preceptor sign-off)

2. Evidence of current professional business documentation

a. Current professional business documents:

- Business registration documents (e.g., articles of incorporation, LLC registration, etc.)
- Copy of client contract
- Bio/Resume/headshot

OR

b. Verification of employment by current employer

3. OSHA/Bloodborne Pathogens & Universal Precautions Training

4. Current CPR certificate

5. Current professional liability insurance

6. Agreement to comply with the National Doula Certification Board (NDCB) Code of Conduct and Professional Standards and to operate within the Certified Professional Doula (CPD) Scope of Practice

Process for the NDCB Review of Clinical Experience:

Candidates seeking certification under Pathway 2, shall submit their hours log, their clinical experience log, and their writeup for review by the NDCB, under the guidance of the Clinical Expert. This review may involve validation through randomized checks of the hospital log to ensure student hours were recorded correctly. Board members that are part of the review of clinical experience must strictly adhere to the Board Independence statement and follow the documented guidelines if they exist.

Process for the NDCB for conducting final CPD Examination:

The closed answer exam and accompanying skills test will be administered through a credentialing management software solution (Assess.ai).

Process for the NDCB to monitor, record, validate, amend, or change the CPD Exam:

1. The NDCB has unlimited access to view any recordings of exams to ensure appropriate exam processes are followed via the contracted proctoring company. According to the contract, the NDCB will be notified if/when any suspicious activity takes place during the exam.
2. Data will be recorded through a credentialing management software solution from each test administered in the exam metric grid to monitor test results. The NDCB will review the information and recorded data and utilize an appropriate third party, such as a psychometrician, to reaffirm the validity, fairness, and reliability of the exam, at the defined intervals below or as necessary.
3. The NDCB will conduct a regular audit of the exam to ensure no items in the test bank have been threatened by repeated use, expired or contains out of date information based on changes in regulation, legislation, accepted best practices, or the most current Job Task Analysis (JTA). The audit will take place after the initial 50 exams are complete and yearly thereafter and will follow the methodology set forth with the initial item analysis and pilot testing utilizing a modified Angoff Method. The audit will be conducted in conjunction with an external psychometrician or a subject matter expert on the Board.
4. The audit of the exam may also include identification of needed additional exam items that may arise from the above-mentioned changes.
5. New items proposed for the test bank will be required to align with the competencies, knowledge, and skills identified in the most currently conducted JTA and the resulting Content Outline. (And upon final approval, new items will be mapped to the Content Outline.)
6. New items to be added to the exam bank will be created following the process identified in the document – “CPD Exam Development Process”.
7. Once items are created, they will be added to the exam as non-scoring items.
8. Analysis of the piloted items will be evaluated by the NDCB for determining additions to the exam item bank. Tracking of new items through the first subsequent examination rotation will be conducted to determine reliability and validity.
9. A board member, subject matter expert, will be assigned to make any updates or amend the exam on minor errors such as grammar or punctuation as needed without waiting for the annual review.
10. Contingency and action plan for examination breach or suspicion of compromised exam questions:

- a. On-going process of item development as stated in #4 above.
- b. If an audit suggests that an item(s) might be compromised, replacement items from the test bank that align with the content\skill being assessed will be replaced immediately.
- c. If the entire exam is compromised or breached, immediate suspension of access to the exam will be initiated, followed by an investigation to determine the extent of the compromise or breach as well as origination.
 - i. If it is determined that the majority of the exam has been compromised, a new form of the exam will be created from the test bank questions.

CERTIFICATION and CERTIFICATES

This section sets forth the guidelines and requirements for how a candidate must interact with the National Doula Certification Board. Acknowledging this agreement will be required as part of the application process and the recertification process.

The CPD certification is valid for three (3) years and may be renewed every subsequent three years if conditions are met. (See the Recertification section in this document for details.)

Terms of Certification Agreement

Once certificates have been awarded, candidates can practice as a Certified Professional Doula (CPD). They are expected to maintain the National Doula Certification Board's high standards of professionalism and excellence in all forms of services, and to remain within their scope of practice. This section sets forth the guidelines and requirements for how a certified person must interact with the National Doula Certification Board. Each certified person will be required to sign and acknowledge this agreement before final certificates will be issued.

All certified persons and certificate holders agree to the following:

- Doulas only provide non-medical support, and do not diagnose, treat or intervene.
- Doulas are only certified in full spectrum doula care and must act in respect to the scope of practice as detailed in the certification program, and in the manner according to the certification.
- Any certified person will inform the certification board of any matters which affect the capability of the certified person to fulfill the certification requirements.
- Any allegations of misconduct as defined in the Code of Conduct and Standards of Professionalism must be disclosed to the certification board in writing within 10 days and may result in the suspension and/or revocation of the certification. During the time such a claim is being investigated, the person will not represent their certification or certification body.
- The National Doula Certification Board may release confidential certificate holder information if required by law, and the person shall be notified as to what information is released unless also prohibited by law.

- To provide proof of meeting all requirements for certification. Additionally, the National Doula Certification Board may ask for clarification or further verification of information submitted from the certified person or source of information.
- When seeking recertification, satisfy all recertification requirements that are listed in the Recertification section of the Applicant/Candidate Handbook.
- To never use any of the National Doula Certification organization, name, logos, branding materials, certificate, or marks in such a manner as to bring the certification body into disrepute, or in a way that is misleading, misrepresenting, or unauthorized.
- Discontinue use of the certification and any claims to or references to the certification and or certification status upon suspension or withdrawal of the certification.
- Return any certificates issued upon withdrawal of the certification.

Issuing of Certificates

The National Doula Certification Board will review all certification requirements from each candidate and make determination on issuing certification. Certified persons will be issued an electronic certificate, bearing their full name, issue date, expiration, certification number and will be signed by the National Doula Certification Board, who retains sole ownership of the certificate and certification.

Certificates will be sent electronically within 4-6 weeks of completion. All certificates are non-transferable.

Designation and Credentials

All certified persons are granted the CPD credential as represented by the scope of practice. Each doula will be listed in the directory on the NDCB website. All certified persons may use Certified Professional Doula (CPD) as a personal credential on all marketing materials, stationery, website, business cards, bios, social media, logos, or other promotional materials.

All certificates will contain the name of the National Doula Certification Board as the designated certifying body.

The following is the appropriate and acceptable way to designate such credential:

First name, Last name, Certified Professional Doula

First name, Last name, CPD

The Certified Professional Doula (CPD) credential is a registered trademark of the National Doula Certification Board and cannot be used in any other way.

Certified persons are not licensed or registered, and may not imply or use any such designation, title, or term.

The CPD designation does not grant the certified person use of the National Doula Certification Board logos, slogans, photos, content, assets, marketing materials, or any course materials and documents.

Each certified person will be given an electronic badge file to signify certification and may use the badge at their discretion on their personal marketing materials, stationary,

website, business cards, bios, social media, and other materials, so long as the file is not tampered with nor modified in any way. If a certified person is in partnership or a member of a group or agency, the electronic badge file must only be used in conjunction with the certified person's personal information and not used in any way to designate certification of the entire group or partnership.

Suspension and Revocation

The National Doula Certification Board reserves the right to investigate the circumstances of any complaint against a certified person that constitutes a violation of the Terms of Certification Agreement or Code of Conduct and Standards of Professionalism including but not limited to:

Misrepresentation or misuse of the CPD credential will result in suspension and may result in withdrawal of certification.

Should the certification be revoked, suspended, or terminated for any reason, the person must remove the CPD credential and badge and cease all use.

NDCB board members assigned to the investigation under this process must review the initial details of the investigation of the parties and circumstances surrounding the investigation and recuse themselves from this process if conflict of the Board Independence statement exists.

In the event that a certificant fails to renew or certify, the NDCB sends a communication reminding them of the policy regarding the use of the badge and/or CPD credential.

Appendix B: Areas of Responsibility - Recertification Process

The following measures will be taken to ensure impartiality in the **Recertification Process**:

The National Doula Certification Board as defined in the Certification Process, will be responsible for evaluating candidate applications for recertification.

Recertification is necessary at the three-year calendar date from original certification or the latest recertification date.

Board Authority:

The National Doula Certification Board is responsible for reviewing the information submitted by the candidate for continuing education as a part of the recertification application. The National Doula Certification Board holds the authority for approving courses to be applied to the recertification requirement. The National Doula Certification Board holds the authority for granting any extensions for recertification. Recertification extensions may be granted (upon special request) for up to six (6) months past the expiration date and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If recertification is not completed within the extension window, the certification will expire, and the person is no longer eligible for recertification.

The recertification period is based upon similar industry fields, and best practices as no regulatory requirements currently exist.

Recertification Requirements:

The following list is required for recertification

1. Complete 20 contact hours of continuing education
2. Complete a Keeping Current pathway:
 - a. Complete a pre-approved 10 contact hour Keeping Current course on current practices, research, community, and legislative updates, as well as providing a practice experience for validation of doula work and any other training updates.
- OR
- b. Submit 10 contact hours of coursework covering:
 - Current research findings
 - Current training updates from the original training organization
 - Regulatory updates, any new/current legislative recommendations for practice
 - Issues in the community
 - Plan for professional development
 - Doula Practice validation (i.e., submit evidence of current practice as independent or as employed as a W2 employee)
3. Evidence of current CPR certificate
4. Evidence of current liability Insurance (by self or employer)
5. Agreement to continue to comply with the National Doula Certification Board (NDCB) Code of Conduct and Professional Standards and to operate within the Certified Professional Doula (CPD) Scope of Practice

Process:

Candidates for recertification must successfully complete all of the above requirements along with payment prior to submitting application for recertification by the National Doula Certification Board. Applicants who have completed all prerequisites will be notified by the Board after review and approval.

Appendix C: Board Job Descriptions

Chairperson

The Chairperson is a voting member and shall be responsible for assuring the National Doula Certification Board has a well-developed philosophy and principles related to the work of the NDCB and the organization. The Chairperson will also ensure the appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the effective management of the Board.

Responsibilities also include:

- Ensure meeting agendas are structured to support discussion and appropriate review of student work as well as facilitating the Board meetings and work.
- Ensure the NDCB has the diversity of skill, expertise, knowledge, and representation to support the work of the NDCB.
- Managing organizational structure.
- Conduct routine (annually) assessments to hold the Board accountable, track performance and identify development goals.
- Ensure NDCB is tasked appropriately to carry out the Mission of the National Doula Certification Board.
- Assign subject matter experts on board related matters, for example, exam review and writing.

Vice Chairperson

The Vice-Chair shall have and exercise all powers and duties of the Chair for meetings over which he or she is called to preside, including executing official board records and documents, and at ceremonial and official functions, which the Chair cannot attend.

Responsibilities also include:

- Assist the Chair, as appropriate, in fulfilling all responsibilities and specific duties described within the Chair of the Board Position Description.
- Report to, advise, and provide wise counsel to the Chair.
- Assist and advise the Chair on establishing agendas and meeting materials for board meetings.
- Collaborate with the Chair to develop and implement processes and practices that support the deliberations of the Board in order that the Board may diligently fulfill its duties and conduct its work and affairs effectively and efficiently.
- Oversight of all financial activities of the NDCB.

Treasurer

The Board Treasurer shall have and exercise all powers and duties of the role of Treasurer related to NDCB finances and to safeguard the organization's finances. This involves ensuring accurate financial reporting, sound financial policies, and compliance with all relevant regulations.

Responsibilities also include:

- Oversee and present budgets, accounts, and financial statements to the Board of Directors.
- Liaise with Chair and Vice Chair about financial matters.
- Ensure that appropriate financial systems and controls are in place.
- Ensure that record-keeping and accounts meet the conditions of statutory bodies.

Financial Planning and Budgeting:

- Develop and review financial policies and procedures.
- Assist in the preparation of the annual budget and its presentation to the Board for approval.
- Monitor the budget throughout the fiscal year, reporting any significant discrepancies to the Board.

Secretary

The Secretary is a key governance position of the Board and provides essential support to the Chair of the Board in ensuring that board procedures are both followed and regularly reviewed.

Responsibilities also include:

Meeting Administration:

- Schedule, organize, and publicize board meetings and other meetings as required.
- Prepare agendas in collaboration with the Board Chair.
- Take and distribute minutes of all board meetings.
- Ensure that the meeting minutes are signed by the Chair after approval.

Records Management:

- Maintain effective records and administration.
- Uphold the legal requirements of governing documents, company policy and procedure.
- Custodian of the governance documents such as the handbooks and other legal and strategic documents.

Communication:

- Ensure effective communication.
- Assist with correspondence addressed to the Board.
- Help in the induction of new directors, providing them with an understanding of their legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

Membership Database:

- Maintain the register of Board Members and ensure Board Member information is up to date.

Clinical Expert

The Clinical Expert is a voting member and shall be responsible for providing clinical knowledge, expectations and understanding to the candidate oversight review and process.

Responsibilities also include:

- Review standards of professionalism and excellence of services regarding clinical application.
- Provide clinical expertise, knowledge and understanding toward decision making when clinical requirements come into question for the Board's consideration.
- Bring forward any clinical changes needed to be updated that would affect items on the exam.

Community Members

The Community Member(s) is a voting member and shall be responsible for participating in the credentialing and recredentialing process.

Responsibilities include:

- Review application and eligibility for initial certification requirements
- Review application and eligibility for recredentialing

Possess decision making authority on candidate and certified persons access and continuation opportunities.

Appendix D: CPD CANDIDATE/CERTIFIED PERSONS

COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES & APPEALS

Complaints or Grievances Against a Certified Persons

Any complaint or grievance against a CPD certified person or candidate must be submitted to the National Doula Certification Board and must meet the following requirements:

- List specific violation of the Code of Conduct and Standards of Professional Practice
- Be submitted in writing by the individual who is making the complaint.
- Be supported by definitive and specific evidence.
- Be made against a current holder of an CPD doula certification/credential

Process and Procedure:

- The complaint and all related documentation will be dealt with in a strictly confidential manner.
- The Appeals Committee shall be formed at the discretion of the NDCB chairperson and members will be determined by the nature of the appeal and shall not include persons involved in the initial decision being appealed. Each appeals committee will be formed on an as-needed basis, and only for the duration of the appeal.
- The complaint form on the National Doula Certification Board website will include a statement that the complainant must agree to hold in strict confidence the filing of the complaint. He/she will not announce or promote in any manner, or use personal or institutional communication vehicles, to announce filing of a complaint.
- If a preliminary investigation of the information/evidence reveals a valid complaint, the individual(s) named in the written complaint will be sent a "Notice of Complaint" via email. The Certification Board will also request any additional information needed and a specific timeframe for providing such information. If this additional information is not received, a decision will be rendered based on the information initially provided. Board members involved in the complaint and grievance process must adhere to the Board Independence guidelines of conflict of interest and impartiality.
- If it is determined that no further action is warranted, the complainant will be advised in writing of the outcome of the initial assessment. The target date for this communication is within 30 calendar days after receipt of the complaint.
- If the initial investigation supports the complaint, an independent investigation will commence, and the information will be handed over to the National Doula Certification Board.

- The Certification Board will issue a written report of its findings within 60 business days of receiving all further requested supporting information.
- The final disposition will be communicated to the complainant. The target date for this communication is within 10 business days of the written report findings being accepted.
- If for any reason the target deadlines in this procedure are not able to be met, a progress notice will be sent to the complainant, outlining when the findings will be communicated.

CPD APPEALS (For Candidates or Certified Persons)

An appeal is a formal request for special consideration regarding a decision made by the Certification Board or its representatives related to an individual's achievement or retention of a certification.

National Doula Certification Board shall have a process for handling appeals in a constructive, impartial, and timely manner. Board members involved in the appeals process will adhere to the Board Independence statement.

Appeals will be considered for:

- Denied eligibility requirements
- Examination irregularities
- Suspension/revocation of certification

The individual appealing must have a sound rationale regarding the need to be considered by the Board for special consideration to be awarded. Also, an appeal is not an avenue for requesting a passing score on a failed exam.

CPD Appeal Process and Procedure

An appeal must be submitted within 10 days of the notification of a decision by the National Doula Certification Board. Individuals must submit a completed Appeals Application and send via email to info@doulaboard.org with the word "Appeal" and the student's name in the subject line of the email.

The form that must be used for all appeals is called The Candidate & Certified Person Appeals Application and it can be found in the Forms section of this handbook or from the National Doula Certification Board. Appeals are not accepted without this form. All relevant supporting documentation must be included, and copies must be included with the submission.

All appellants will be treated fairly and equitably, and decisions shall not result in any discriminatory actions.

Initial Review

The National Doula Certification Board chairperson will review the appeal and a response will be sent to the appellant via email within ten (10) days of receipt.

Initial Response

The initial response will be one of:

- Appeal Denied
 - The response will be accompanied by an explanation for the denial and/or information on an alternate course of action where applicable. The denial will include information on the appellant's further recourse if the appellant wishes to pursue the appeal.
- Appeal Granted/Approved

A progress notice may be sent with one of the following

- Appeal Forwarded to the Appeals Committee
- Appeal Delayed to provide time to gather further information
 - Within 30 calendar days, the appellant will be sent either an Appeal Denied or Appeal Forwarded notification (if necessary).

Written notice of the Appeals and Program Complaints Panel determination (Appeal Denied or Appeal Granted) or a progress notice (Appeal Forwarded or Appeal Delayed) will be provided to the appellant within 10 business days of the determination.

CPD Appeals Committee Composition

The Appeals Committee shall be formed at the discretion of the National Doula Certification Board chairperson and members will be determined by the nature of the appeal and shall not include persons involved in the initial decision being appealed. Each appeals committee will be formed on an as-needed basis, and only for the duration of the appeal.

Upon receipt of the appeal, the Appeals Committee shall review the appeal within 10 days and if the matter can be handled, a decision will be made, and the appellant will be informed. If the Appeal Committee decides they need more information and want to meet in person with the appellant, they will contact the appellant to set up a time and place for that meeting. Upon the conclusion of that meeting, the Appeals Committee will discuss any new information they received and arrive at a decision within three (3) business days and the appellant will be informed by email immediately of the final decision.

The final decision of the Appeals Committee cannot be contested.

Appeals and complaints are kept confidential, and no discriminatory action will be taken against the appellant.

Appendix E: REALEASE OF INFORMATION PROCEDURES

The National Doula Certification Board commits to processing personal information responsibly and in compliance with all applicable privacy laws. Personal information will only be disclosed to third parties with proper authorization and in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

Procedures

Request for Information Release:

If NDCB receives a request for Legal Release of Confidential Information, the Board must notify the applicant, candidate or certificant of the request by sending the Legal Release of Confidential Information Notification Letter.

Additionally, an applicant, candidate or certificant may request a release of information to the NDCB. All requests for the release of personal information must be formally made in writing by completing the Permission to Release Information Form.

The request must specify the information needed, the purpose of the request, and the recipient of the information.

Verification of Request:

NDCB must verify the identity of the individual requesting the release of personal information by verifying their Certification Number, along with their name, email address, personal address, phone and signature.

Record Keeping:

Maintain a log of all disclosures of personal information, including the details of the requester, purpose of the request, information released, date of release, and method of release.

Records are stored securely and in compliance with the organization's data retention policy.

Limiting Disclosure:

Only the minimum necessary personal information required to fulfill the purpose of the request should be disclosed.

Secure Transmission:

Ensure that the method of transmitting personal information is secure (e.g., encrypted emails, secure file transfer protocols).

Appendix F: Board Evaluation Form

The NDCB conducts an evaluation annually. Board members are asked to provide candid and constructive feedback on the performance of the board as

a whole and, where applicable, on their own performance, using a rating scale of 1-5. Comments are allowed at the end of the evaluation form.

Board Structure and Composition

1. The board has an appropriate size, composition, and diversity to fulfill its responsibilities effectively.
2. Board members possess the necessary skills, experience, and expertise to govern effectively.
3. The board regularly reviews its structure, composition, and performance.

Board Meetings

4. Board meetings are conducted in an efficient, effective, and timely manner.
5. The frequency and length of board meetings are appropriate.
6. Board members receive meeting materials that are clear, concise, and sent out in advance.

Board Leadership and Roles

7. The board chair effectively facilitates board meetings and ensures that all voices are heard.
8. Board members understand their roles and responsibilities and fulfill them appropriately.

Board Performance and Accountability

9. The board regularly assesses its performance and identifies areas for improvement.
10. Board members are held accountable for their performance and participation.
11. The board takes appropriate action to address any conflicts of interest.

Mission Statement and Purpose

12. The board clearly understands and is committed to the organization's mission and purpose.
13. The board regularly reviews and aligns its activities and decisions with the organization's mission and purpose.

Overall Evaluation

14. The board effectively fulfills its governance responsibilities.

15. Overall, I am satisfied with the performance and effectiveness of the board.

Additional Comments:

Appendix G: National Doula Certification Board (NDCB) Board Appointment Process

As mentioned previously, serving as a NDCB member is a big commitment, and we could not influence the elevation of the doula profession without this commitment. Board members are an extension of the team and keep the organization accountable to the Mission, Vision and Values.

Board members are appointed for an initial term of two (2) years and may be re-appointed for three (3) additional two-year terms not to exceed a total of six (6) consecutive years. The National Doula Certification Board appoints and may remove Board members at its discretion.

Board Appointment Process:

1. Expression of Interest

- Prospective board members are typically introduced to the NDCB in one of two ways:
 - Referral by an existing member or stakeholder.
 - Inquiry submitted directly from the NDCB Website.

2. Initial Contact and Informational Discussion

- A member of the Governance Committee reaches out to the interested individual to:
 - Schedule a phone call or online video conference.
 - Discuss the individual's interest in serving on the NDCB Board.
 - Provide an overview of NDCB's mission, structure, and board member responsibilities.

3. Application Materials

- Following the initial conversation, the Governance Committee member:
 - Sends the NDCB Board Handbook and Board Application via email.
 - Requests submission of a completed application along with a current resume.

4. Governance Committee Review

- Upon receipt of the application and resume:
 - The Governance Committee convenes (either through a scheduled meeting or via email discussion) to review the submitted materials.
 - The Committee evaluates the candidate's qualifications, interest, and fit with board needs.

5. Governance Committee Vote

- The Governance Committee votes to determine whether to recommend the applicant for appointment.
- Applications receiving committee approval move forward for full board consideration.

6. Full Board Review and Vote

- The application(s) recommended by the Governance Committee are presented at the next scheduled full board meeting.
- The full board votes on the appointment of the candidate(s).

7. Post-Appointment Follow-Up

- If appointed:
 - A member of the Governance Committee contacts the new board member to notify them of their appointment.
 - An onboarding meeting is scheduled to:
 - Welcome the new member.
 - Review board expectations, responsibilities, and upcoming meetings.
 - Provide access to necessary materials and resources.

Appendix H: Board Membership Process

There are two primary pathways through which individuals may be considered for NDCB Board Membership:

1. **Referral** – A current Board Member refers a prospective candidate.
2. **Outreach** – An individual expresses interest by submitting an inquiry through the Contact Page on the NDCB website.

Governance Committee Process:

1. A member of the Governance Committee will respond to the referral or inquiry via email to schedule an introductory meeting, which may take place in person or virtually.
2. During the meeting, the Committee member will explore the individual's interest in NDCB, review their background, and answer any questions.
3. The Committee member will also provide an overview of NDCB's history, walk through relevant sections of the NDCB Board Handbook, outline expectations for board service, and explain the next steps in the process.
4. Following the meeting, the prospective candidate will receive the NDCB Board Handbook, a Board Member application, and a request for a resume, CV, or professional biography.
5. Upon receipt of the required materials, the Governance Committee will convene to review the application and supporting documents. A vote will be taken regarding advancement.
6. If the applicant is approved by the Governance Committee, the recommendation will be brought forward to the full Board for final review and vote.