

YOUR BODY. YOUR BABY.

YOUR birth rights



REVIEW YOUR BIRTH RIGHTS AND
CONFIDENTLY ADVOCATE FOR YOUR
CHOICES IN MATERNITY CARE

Disclaimer

I am not a lawyer and this e-book should not be considered legal advice. It is your responsibility to make sure the law is the same in your state as laws vary and can suddenly change. The specific details of any case can change the rights to which a person is entitled. The purpose of this e-book is to serve as an overview of birth rights and encourage parents to do the research necessary to have an educated birth.

P O R S C H E L E E . C O M

Y O U R B O D Y . B A B Y . B I R T H R I G H T S

The Right to Receive Care

Every birthing person has the right to be seen and receive medical attention. A patient's race, gender, ability to pay, and/or choice to revoke consent of a recommended procedure does not disqualify them from receiving treatment during labor.

Hospitals are required by law to follow the standard of care regardless of a patient's status.

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The Right to Choose & Change Providers

Once you have chosen a provider you are not obligated to stick with them the entire pregnancy-birth. Especially a provider that does not respect your choices or desires you to submit to their preferences. Additionally, in the event that you are birthing in a hospital & feel you are being mistreated you have the right to request to be treated from someone else (this includes nurses).

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The Right to Choose Where to Give Birth

There is no law that says you must give birth in a hospital. There are other options like your home, and birthing centers. However, there are some states with restrictions on where providers are allowed to treat someone in labor. It is important to look up the specifics in your state and ask your provider if they are able to practice in the setting you desire.

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The Right to Informed Consent.

Your provider must explain the risks, benefits, necessity, and alternatives for any and all medical procedures. If you do not understand or agree, your provider may not perform the treatment or procedure. You have the right to voice your concerns and ask all the questions you need. No one can do anything to you (your body) or your baby without your consent.

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The Right to Revoke Consent.

In the event that you are no longer comfortable with a procedure or medication you have the right to revoke your consent. You have the right to change your mind. You should feel confident and secure in your choices. Ex: You previously requested an epidural but after more info or labor progressing well w/o it you change your mind. It is okay to revoke consent.

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Y O U R B O D Y . B A B Y . B I R T H R I G H T S

The Right to Decline Medical Procedures

You have the right to decline a medical surgery or procedure even if it is for the sake of someone else (including your baby). This includes medical interventions such as:

Ultrasound, Medical Tests, Fetal Monitoring, Induction, Episiotomy, C-Section, and Cervical Check. Do your research, discuss with your provider, make informed decisions, & trust your intuition.

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The Right to Birth Vaginally

There is a common belief that once you've had a c-section you can only have a c-section. A patient has the right to opt for a vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC) regardless of previously scheduling a cesarean for their birth and/or if they've had a cesarean in the past. You can discuss the benefits and risks of a VBAC with your midwife or physician to make an informed decision.

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The Right to Give Birth in Desired Position

You have the right to labor in whichever position is less stressful for both baby & self. Listen to your body. Consult with your provider during pregnancy regarding their comfortability with alternative positions. If you opt for an epidural your movement may be limited however, there are still additional positions available such as birthing lying on your side.

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The Right to a Support Person During Labor

You have the right to be accompanied by a support person during labor such as a partner, friend, family member and/or a doula.

Hospitals have different policies for how many visitors are allowed during labor and if they are allowed to come and go during your stay. It is important to familiarize yourself with your birthing location policies.

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The Right to Privacy

A patient has the right to their privacy in their medical information at all stages of their pregnancy and labor. You have the right to ask anyone to leave your room including a visitor, nurse, medical resident, anyone you want. You have the right to decline being photographed or used for a study. A hospital, provider, or midwife can not use your photograph for marketing purposes without permission.

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The Right to Obtain Your Medical Records

You have the right to have access to a copy of both your and your baby's complete medical records, including nurses notes, from your hospital stay.

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The Right to Make Medical Decisions About Your Baby

You have the right to decline medical procedures or interventions you do not believe are in the best interest of your baby. Even something as "simple" yet special as baby's first bath. You have this right as long as those decisions do not rise to the level of neglect. Opting to refuse life-saving treatment is considered illegal.

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The Right to Keep Baby at Your Bedside

You have the right to keep your baby in your room and cared for at your bedside.

This is your right as long as baby is not in need of emergency care. You have the right to be present for any medical treatment/testing for your baby to provide consent.

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The Right to file a Complaint

You are not violating your own medical privacy by sharing your story. If you choose to share or file a complaint, be sure to tell what you know to be true facts of your case. It is important to include accurate information, especially when including providers names.

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Congrats on making it through your
birth rights review!

While providers are expected to respect your rights, parents are expected to educate themselves on the physical and psychological process of labor, birth, and postpartum. Beyond your rights, it is important to understand common procedures, interventions, and birth outcomes. Sometimes a birth does not go to plan, but a plan keeps your team on the same page in terms of your birth values. It's your responsibility to communicate your plan to your team. Consider discussing it with your provider & providing a copy for the nurse if laboring in a hospital. Remember, hospital policy is not law. Trust your intuition and assert your choices.

You got this.



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INTERESTED IN ADDING A DOULA TO
YOUR BIRTH TEAM?
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TO SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION

