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**SENATE BILL 6172**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Nobles, Randall, Dhingra, Frame, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Lovelett, Nguyen, Saldaña, Shewmake, Trudeau, and C. Wilson

AN ACT Relating to birth doulas; amending RCW 18.47.010 and 18.47.030; and adding a new section to chapter 18.47 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 18.47.010 and 2022 c 217 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) ((~~"Department" means the department of health.~~

~~(2)~~)) "Birth doula" means a person that is a nonmedical birth coach or support person trained to provide physical, emotional, and informational support to birthing persons during pregnancy from the date of confirmed conception, antepartum, labor, birth, and the postpartum period. Birth doulas advocate for and support birthing people and families to self-advocate by helping them to know their rights and make informed decisions. Birth doulas do not provide medical care.

((~~(3)~~)) (2) "Culturally congruent care" means a duty to learn respect for and uphold a birth doula's client's cultural practices around birth regardless of the birth doula's identity. "Culturally congruent care" includes a birth doula's duty to use community resources and networks to help families access other doulas from the same background, religion, culture, and community as them.

(3) "Department" means the department of health.

(4) "Postpartum period" means the 12-month period beginning on the last day of the pregnancy.

((~~(4)~~)) (5) "Secretary" means the secretary of health.

**Sec.**  RCW 18.47.030 and 2022 c 217 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The secretary shall:

(a) In collaboration with community partners who advance equitable access to improve perinatal outcomes and care through holistic services for black and brown communities, adopt rules establishing the competency-based requirements that a birth doula must meet to obtain certification. The rules must establish processes that allow for applicants to meet the competency-based requirements through the following pathways:

(i) Successful completion of training and education programs approved by the secretary, including proof of knowledge related to culturally congruent care; and

(ii) Submission of proof of successful completion of culturally congruent ancestral practices, training, and education that the secretary must review and determine whether the training and education meet the competency-based requirements;

(b) Establish certification and renewal fees, administrative procedures, continuing education, administrative requirements, and forms necessary to implement this chapter in accordance with RCW 43.70.250 and 43.70.280;

(c) Maintain a record of all applicants and certifications under this chapter; and

(d) Hire clerical, administrative, and investigative staff as needed to implement and administer this chapter.

(2) All fees collected under this chapter must be credited to the health professions account as required under RCW 43.70.320.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 18.47 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to amounts appropriated specifically for this purpose, in no case may the secretary:

(a) Between July 1, 2025, and July 1, 2030, impose any certification, examination, or renewal fee upon a person seeking certification as a certified doula under this chapter;

(b) After July 1, 2030, impose a certification, examination, or renewal fee of more than $95 upon a person seeking certification as a certified doula under this chapter.

(2) All fees under this section shall be fixed by rule adopted by the secretary in accordance with the provisions of the administrative procedure act, chapter 34.05 RCW.

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