



**COLORADO**

Department of Health Care  
Policy & Financing

1570 Grant Street  
Denver, CO 80203

# R-9 Advancing Birthing Equity

*HCPF Fact Sheet*

## What does this budget request do?

The Department requests funding to promote increased health equity outcomes by implementing Medicaid coverage for a) birthing doulas and B) outpatient human donor milk.

## Why is this budget request needed?

This budget request is needed because neither doula services nor outpatient human donor milk are currently covered by the Department. First, a doula is a trained, non-medical professional who provides continuous physical, emotional and informational support to a mother before, during and after childbirth to help achieve the healthiest experience possible. Doulas directly engage with underserved populations to ensure that their concerns are being heard and addressed, and ultimately close persistent equity gaps. Members of our Maternity Advisory Committee report social support and postpartum support from the community among their greatest challenges. They've cited access to culturally responsive providers as a means to improve outcomes in this space. Second, the use of human donor milk instead of infant formula has been shown to be safer for infants and improves the likelihood that a parent who wishes to breastfeed will be able to.

## What are the consequences if this budget request isn't funded?

If this budget request is not funded, both doula services and human donor milk will continue to be unavailable to Medicaid members in Colorado. The lack of access to these services can result in poorer health outcomes for individuals giving birth as well as for infants.

## What is the stakeholder engagement for this budget request?

The Department built the request with many details to be determined with stakeholder feedback, which is why the Department requests \$130,000 in this request to hire a vendor to support a community-based, equity driven stakeholder process. Input from doulas, obstetric providers, members and advocates will help inform critical model components including how to spend the \$100,000 in training funds to build community capacity.

## What is the overall fiscal impact for this budget request?

**FY 2023-24 Budget Impact:** Reduction of \$702,853 Total Funds, including a reduction of \$357,242 General Fund

**FY 2024-25 Budget Impact:** Reduction of \$75,237 Total Funds, including a reduction of \$49,744 General Fund



## For more information contact

Iris Hentze, HCPF Senior Legislative Analyst, 720.692.4288, [iris.hentze@state.co.us](mailto:iris.hentze@state.co.us)

