



Medicaid Reimbursement for Doula Services in Vermont

Early Childhood Day at the Legislature Update

March 11, 2026

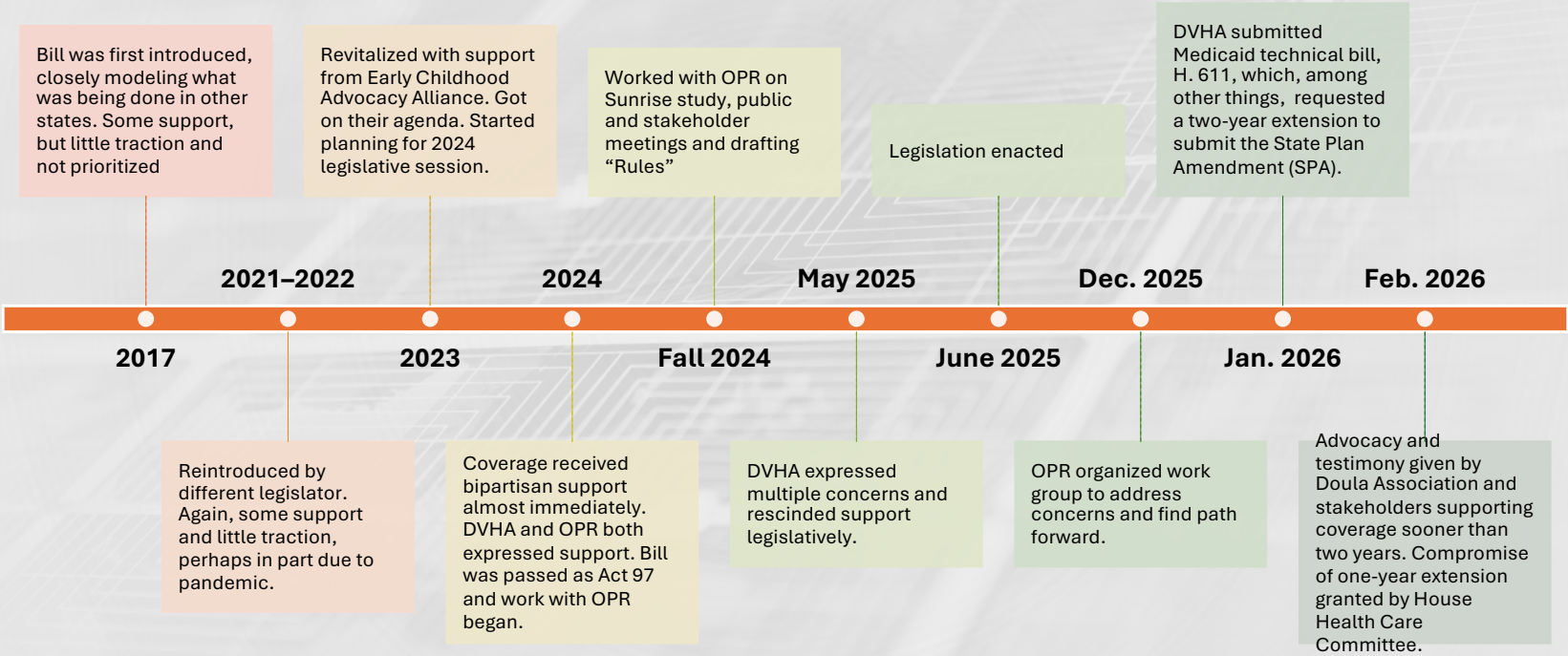


What is Community Doula Care?

“Community-based doulas offer culturally pertinent support to under-resourced and marginalized families during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum in communities facing systemic and structural inequities. This model expands on traditional doula care by providing comprehensive services through a holistic and multifaceted approach, building ongoing relationships with community members, and sharing lived experience, culture, and language with the communities they serve. Using community strength the scaffold program delivery, community-based doula models reject the deficit-based approach commonly used in clinical settings to support under-resourced communities.”

Health Connect One, The Perinatal Revolution

History of Doula Medicaid Legislative work



**DAV: Doula Association
of Vermont**
*Formed as recommended
by National Law Project*

A project of
National
Health Law
Program:
specializes
in sexual &
reproductive
health.

“The National Health Law Program (NHeLP)’s Doula Medicaid Project seeks to improve health outcomes and address inequities in maternal health by ensuring that all pregnant, postpartum, and post-pregnancy people who want access to a doula can have one. Our starting point in this work is expanding access to sustainable, equitable, and inclusive programs for Medicaid coverage for doula care.”

•www.Healtlaw.org/doulamedicaidproject

Amy Chen,
Senior
Attorney:
provides
consultation
to states

Guidance includes:

Doula Advisory Board that oversees trainings,
competencies, peer review group

Multiple pathways for certification

Specialty trainings

Protection of doula/client relationship

Elevating the voices of VT doulas

- BBF funding has supported its recent development
- Unified voice for Doulas in Vermont
- Nearly 50 members and growing
- Supported statewide training
- Working on mentorship and workforce development programming
- Assisting with legislative efforts
- www.doulavt.org



DOULA ASSOCIATION OF VERMONT

Vermont Department
of Health Access
(DVHA) : responsible
for administering
Medicaid in the state

- Legislators directed DVHA to:
 - Determine estimated costs and cost benefits of Medicaid coverage
 - Determine pay rate and structure for Medicaid coverage

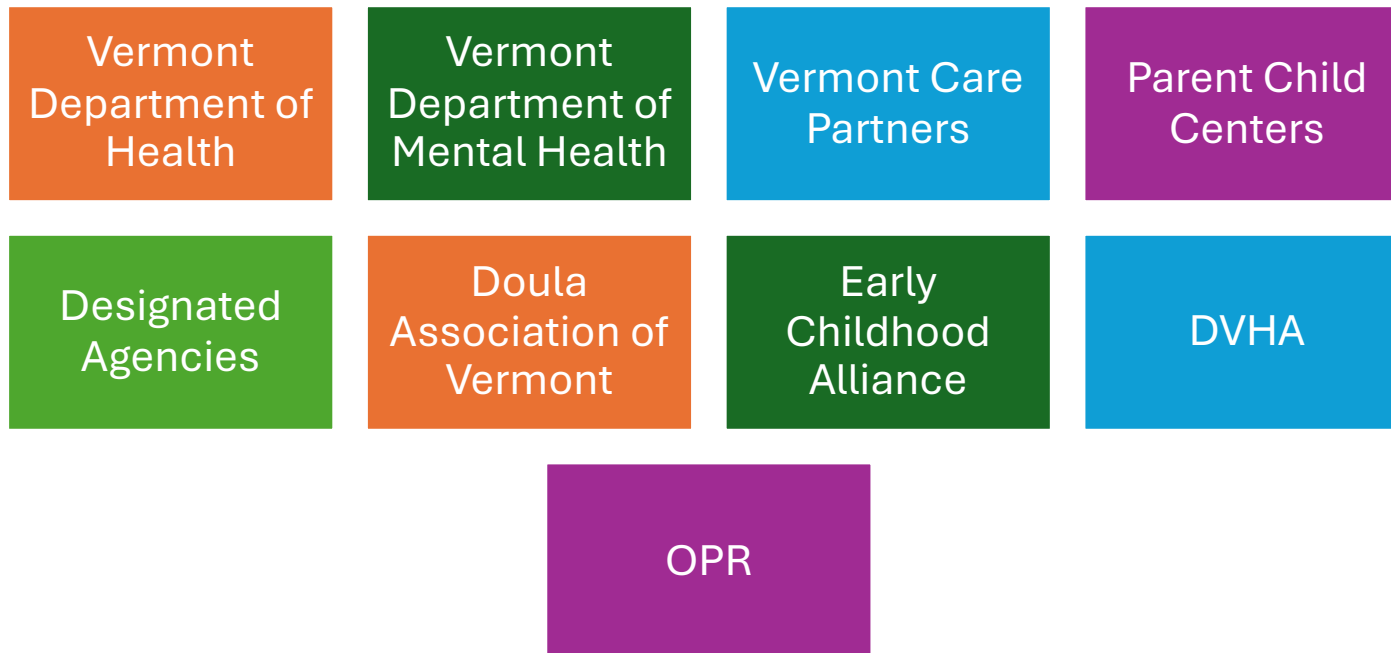
Office of Professional Regulation (OPR):
Regulates professions and professionals in Vermont in varying ways and degrees

- **Registration**
(such as massage therapists)
- **Certification**
(such as music therapists)
- **Licensure** (such as social workers)

Each pathway has fees attached

- Legislators directed OPR to conduct “Sunrise Study”
 - OPR studies what the risk to public is, what is currently happening in other states, takes public feedback, and makes recommendation based on findings

Who are stakeholders? Work group has representatives from the following:





Advocacy Works!



With support from The Alliance:

- DAV testified to DVHA's concerns and proposed roadblocks, offering clarifying information
- Met with and emailed key legislators
- Continued to bring in state level stakeholders to express support

The results:

- House Health Care declined DVHA's request for two-year delay and compromised with a one year.
- Medicaid coverage for doula care will begin July 1, 2027

What's next?

DVHA

- Address “clinical touchpoint/referral questions and needs
- Settle on reimbursement rates and structure
- Submit SPA to federal government

OPR : Rule Making Process

- Identify certification pathways and competencies to become a “Certified Vermont Perinatal Doula”
- Present their “rules” to Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules (ICAR) for legality lens
- Open rule making to public comment
- Present to Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR)

What's next for DAV, doulas and stakeholders?

Support DVHA and OPR as appropriate and necessary, continue to advocate for doulas as needed

DAV to hold additional doula training (s)

Securing funds for DAV operation

Keeping doulas updated on progress and how to become certified as a Vermont perinatal doula

Supporting doulas with certification, becoming a Medicaid provider, billing requirements and process

Working to educate providers about doula care, its availability and how to refer

Working to educate families about doula care, its availability and how to access

Legislative Ask

- Thank House Health Care Committee members for supporting implementation of Medicaid reimbursement for doula services by revising and passing H.611
- Ask Senate Health and Welfare Committee members to pass H.611 with the doula language as approved by the House

Medicaid coverage is about getting douglas paid, right?

Yes.....and no



Medicaid coverage is a *potential piece* of reproductive justice

- Reproductive Justice : “the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities...All oppressions impact our reproductive lives; RJ is simply human rights seen through the lens of the nuanced ways oppression impacts self-determined family creation. The intersectionality of RJ is both an opportunity and a call to come together as one movement with the power to win freedom for all oppressed people.”

Sister Song, [http://sistersong.net/reproductive-](http://sistersong.net/reproductive-justice/)

justice/

Thank you!

Maria Rossi

MariaRossi@wcmhs.org

802-522-8637