

Midwife Legislative Agenda 2023

Licensed Midwives provide comprehensive, high quality prenatal care, have excellent birth outcomes and support breastfeeding—all while bending down the healthcare cost curve.

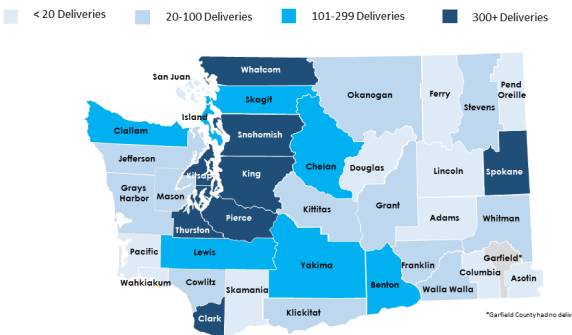
Increase Medicaid Reimbursement for Birth Center Facility Fees and Home Birth Supplies in the State Budget.

Improve midwifery care access by making the profession more sustainable. The requested rates of **home birth supplies at \$1000 (from \$75) per birth** and the **birth center facility reimbursement at \$4900 (from \$1700) per birth** still represent a cost savings to the state as maternity care is an entitlement and the alternative is hospital care. The total cost to the state for the biennium for the increases is approximately \$1 million, and qualifies for a \$1.5 million federal match. (Champions are Rep. Monica Stonier and Sen. Emily Randall.)

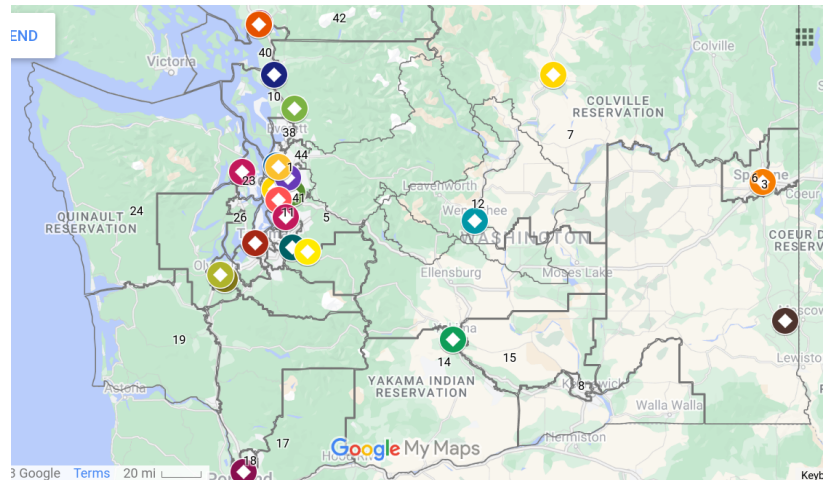
Continue support for the cap on midwifery annual professional licensing fee. A study commissioned by the legislature showed that capping annual professional licensing fees for midwives at **\$525** is well worth the money. Since this cap was put in place, the licensed midwife workforce has more than doubled, resulting in more families in Washington having access to high-quality, cost-effective care and even greater savings to the state budget. The total cost of the licensing fee cap is \$300,000 for the biennium (Champions are Rep. Beth Doglio and Sen. Sam Hunt.)

All Community Births:

Deliveries by Licensed Midwives 2019-2021



42% of Community Births happen in 23 Freestanding Birth Centers



Midwifery Facts:

- Birth outcomes are excellent
- Community birth is safe and valued
- Licensed midwives contract with both private and public payers
- Saves the state money with our cost saving outcomes

Nine new freestanding birth centers (almost all in underserved areas) began operating over the past 5 years, but 4 have also had to close (and 2 more may soon).

Other Bills we are supporting:

[HB 1541](#)

- Establishing the nothing about us without us act to increase access and representation in policy-making processes for people with direct lived experience

[SB 5477:](#)

- Implementing the recommendations of the Washington state missing and murdered indigenous women and people task force.

[SB 5581](#)

- Developing strategies to reduce or eliminate deductibles for maternal support services & postpartum care.

[SB 5580:](#)

- Update the maternity support services program to address perinatal outcomes and increase equity and healthier birth outcomes

[HB 1177/SB5137](#)

- Creating a missing and murdered indigenous women and people cold case investigations unit.

References

WA MMR report

<https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/141-070-MaternalMortalityReviewPanelReport-2023.pdf?uid=63fe2001dc845>

NPR 2/23/23: The number of mothers who die due to pregnancy or childbirth is 'unacceptable'

https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2023/02/23/1158978696/the-number-of-mothers-who-die-due-to-pregnancy-or-childbirth-is-unacceptable?utm_source=npr_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=20230224&utm_term=8020531&utm_campaign=news&utm_id=61668914&orgid=1174&utm_att1=

Seattle Times 2/27/23: Black, Native infants in King County die at higher rate than white babies

<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/health/black-and-native-infants-in-king-county-are-dying-at-a-higher-rate/>

ACOG Journal (2021): Birth Outcomes for Planned Home and Licensed Freestanding Birth Center Births in WA State

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8522628/>

Value of midwifery care

https://www.washingtonmidwives.org/uploads/1/1/3/8/113879963/policy_briefs_evidence_arguments_for_scaling_up_midwifery_to_improve_perinatal_outcomes.pdf

DOH Cost Benefit Study, reaffirmed 2017

https://www.washingtonmidwives.org/uploads/1/1/3/8/113879963/midwifery_cost_study_10-31-07.pdf