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“It’s Your Birth. Know Your Options.”

BirthNetwork National’s Start-up Documents

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**Note: New BirthNetwork National Chapter Leaders will submit completed and signed (or initialed) information from pages 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 or 13, and 16.*



INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in **BirthNetwork National** and for promoting **mother-friendly** birth. We are a non-profit organization that works in many different ways to foster mother-friendly maternity care. One of the major ways you can help do this is to start a local BirthNetwork National chapter, which can provide information on mother-friendly birth to women in your area as well as providing opportunities to network with mother-friendly birth professionals in your area.

If you are interested in starting a chapter, here are some of the things that will be expected of you:

- Have at least two dedicated leaders who will join as BirthNetwork National members.
- Determine the needs of your community and provide programs (meetings, birth fairs, speaking engagements etc) focused on addressing those needs.
- Publish a Birth Resource Guide of professional members who endorse the MFCI (Mother Friendly Childbirth Initiative) annually for your community.
- Encourage memberships and submit membership data.
- Maintain a bank account and comply with the financial reporting requirements.
- Submit financial information quarterly to BirthNetwork National Board.

Of course, BirthNetwork National's National Board will assist you in this endeavor. Some of the support we provide includes, but is not limited to:

- Sharing our non-profit tax status with chapters in good standing.
- Providing startup materials, meeting outlines, program support and guidelines for running local chapters.
- Providing publicity materials ready for customization.
- Providing database management of membership data.
- Providing a professionally designed website that will refer visitors to local chapters. Each chapter has its own customized individual page on the website.
- Providing ongoing support through ongoing Chapter Leader training and Chapter Leader discussion groups (Yahoo email list).
- Providing legislative monitoring of issues pertaining to pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and parenting.
- Creating and maintaining relationships with leadership of other birth organizations and developing partnerships with birth and maternal professionals both locally and nationally
- Providing a national presence through our continued membership and involvement with the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services organization.
- Providing you with a share of all membership funds collected by your chapter and ALL of any additional funds your chapter raises.

If you have decided to join us and start a local chapter your first step is to join BirthNetwork National. The fastest way to do so is online at www.birthnetwork.org. If you do not have access to the Internet, please submit the enclosed paperwork to: P.O. Box 2370, Birmingham MI, 48012.

Local chapters are the leading edge in working to fulfill our mission of promoting mother-friendly maternity care. Please contact us with any further questions. Thank you for your interest and your dedication to improving maternity care!



BirthNetwork National's MISSION

The mission of BirthNetwork National is to promote the awareness and availability of mother-friendly maternity care.

BirthNetwork National is leading a grassroots movement based on the belief that birth can profoundly affect our physical, mental and spiritual well-being. BirthNetwork National advocates mother-friendly care, as defined by the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI). By making informed choices and having confidence in the process, families can experience safe and satisfying childbirth.

BirthNetwork National's HISTORY

BirthNetwork National began in October 1999 when five mothers started brainstorming on how to improve maternity care in their local community. BirthNetwork National is based on the Coalition to Improve Maternity Services' **Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI)**, which outlines the principles of mother-friendly care in order to promote the safest, healthiest, and most cost-effective maternity care.

BirthNetwork National's PROGRAMS

To promote the awareness of mother-friendly maternity care, BirthNetwork National chapters conduct **free meetings** where speakers present on various topics related to pregnancy, birth and the post-partum period. BirthNetwork National offers additional outreach opportunities including birth fairs, conferences, educational curriculum and more.

To promote the availability of mother-friendly maternity care, BirthNetwork National chapters publish a free **Birth Resource Guide** to maternity providers (midwives, physicians, doulas, educators, etc.) who have endorsed the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services' *Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI)*. The guides are available through local chapters and online.

BirthNetwork National's LOCAL CHAPTERS

In order to make more women and families aware of the benefits of mother-friendly pregnancy and birth, BirthNetwork National has developed a structure to allow like-minded individuals to start chapters of BirthNetwork National in their own communities. In addition to the established structure, BirthNetwork National's Board of Directors provides materials and support for local chapters. The local chapters will remain the experts in their community, conduct meetings, publish their local birth resource guides and determine any other programs needed in their area.

BirthNetwork National's LEGAL STRUCTURE OF CHAPTERS

BirthNetwork National chapters officially share the national organization's federal non-profit status. This requires chapters to submit financial reports and follow basic guidelines.



Checklist for Starting a BirthNetwork National Chapter

Initial Requirements:

- ❑ Submit a **New Chapter Application**.
- ❑ Have at least two dedicated individuals willing to serve as Chapter Leaders—ideally for at least two years.
- ❑ All Chapter Leaders join BirthNetwork National as members.
- ❑ All Chapter Leaders sign and submit BirthNetwork National’s **Conflict of Interest Policy**.
- ❑ All Chapter Leaders sign and submit BirthNetwork National’s **Statement of Commitment**.
- ❑ All Chapter Leaders sign and submit BirthNetwork National’s **Articles of Association**.
- ❑ Apply for EIN (Employer Identification Number)—SS4 Form (www.irs.gov)
- ❑ Open and maintain an account at an FDIC-insured financial institution and comply with all of BirthNetwork National’s financial reporting requirements.
- ❑ All Chapter Leaders read and comply with BirthNetwork National’s **Chapter Leader Policies**.
- ❑ Each chapter must sign and submit BirthNetwork National’s **Financial Agreement for BNN Chapters**.
- ❑ Each chapter must divide expected chapter duties/responsibilities among the leaders.

Ongoing Requirements:

- ❑ Work to promote the availability of mother-friendly care in your community by soliciting professional memberships. Professionals who endorse the MFCI and join BirthNetwork are then listed in BirthNetwork National’s online Birth Resource Guide.
- ❑ Read a standard BirthNetwork National meeting introduction and closing at each chapter meeting.
- ❑ Submit new or renewing membership information and shared funds monthly to BirthNetwork National’s Financial Coordinator.
- ❑ Compile and submit chapter financial information quarterly to BirthNetwork National’s Financial Coordinator.

Some Possible Chapter Programs:

- ❑ Free meetings
- ❑ Birth fairs
- ❑ Conferences
- ❑ Speaking engagements at schools and universities
- ❑ Exhibit at community fairs, festivals, and events
- ❑ Organize advocacy efforts, campaigns, demonstrations, etc.
- ❑ Print a Birth Resource Guide to distribute in your community.



Roles of BirthNetwork National Organization and Local Chapters

LEADERSHIP	
NATIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducts on-going Chapter Leader training • Encourages communication among chapters • Establishes and communicates national policy 	CHAPTER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two or more committed Chapter Leaders • Chapter Leaders are committed to avoiding the appearance of a conflict of interest and avoid promoting their birth-related business during BirthNetwork National programs
MEETINGS	
NATIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides six standard meeting outlines, including opening and closing statements • Provides communication skills training and guidelines. 	CHAPTER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds regular free meetings for the public (optional) • All meeting topics are based on the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI)
BIRTH & BEYOND RESOURCE GUIDE	
NATIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a template for printed resource guide • Provides national database system making it easy to track members and export membership information for Resource Guide publication 	CHAPTER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish and distribute a Birth & Beyond Resource Guide of birth-related professional members for local community (optional)
MEMBERSHIP	
NATIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains membership database • Provides template membership solicitation letters • Automated membership renewal process • Sends official thank-you notes for new members, including tax deduction information 	CHAPTER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages chapter membership at meetings and events • Solicits professional members to be listed in the Birth & Beyond Resource Guide • Inputs membership data via the BirthNetwork National Wild Apricot database (back office of BNN's website) • Submits portion of membership funds to National
LEGAL REQUIREMENTS	
NATIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains non-profit status • Files IRS paperwork 	CHAPTER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read standard introduction and closing at each meeting • Submits quarterly chapter financial reports
WEBSITE	
NATIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains and pays for website and online provider guide • Pays for web-based non-profit membership system (Wild Apricot) 	CHAPTER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learns how to utilize the back office of BNN's website (Wild Apricot) • Updates Chapter website pages, organize and promote events, and maintain contact with Chapter Members
PROGRAM IDEAS	
NATIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides mentoring support and materials (when applicable) on executing program ideas 	CHAPTER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines the local needs in their own community and tailors program ideas to fit these local needs (ex. Meetings, Birth Fairs, Conferences, Exhibits, Speaking engagements etc.)
ADVOCACY	
NATIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides guidance on legislative and consumer advocacy 	CHAPTER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for important birth related issues within local community



BirthNetwork National New Chapter Application

New Chapter Name: (ex: BirthNetwork of NW Arkansas)

Chapter location (city or county or area and state):

Unique Email address for chapter; this should not be a chapter leader's personal email address. We can assign a `chaptername@birthnetwork.org` address if desired:

Chapter Leader Name: (1)

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Other Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Type of Membership (please circle): Birth Advocate or Professional

Membership fees (please circle): Enclosed or paid online



BirthNetwork National New Chapter Application (continued)

Chapter Leader Name: (2)

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Other Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Type of Membership (please circle): Birth Advocate or Professional

Membership fees (please circle): Enclosed or paid online

Chapter Leader Name: (3)

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Other Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Type of Membership (please circle): Birth Advocate or Professional

Membership fees (please circle): Enclosed or paid online



BirthNetwork National Chapter Articles of Association

Article 1

- The name of the central organization is BirthNetwork National.
 - The name of the chapter organization, which is subject to BirthNetwork National's general supervision and control, is *BirthNetwork National*.
-

Article 2

- The purpose of this chapter is exclusively for charitable and educational purposes, including for such purpose, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. The chapter will act as the local representative of BirthNetwork National.
 - No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing of or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for political office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding future federal tax code.
-



BirthNetwork National Chapter Articles of Association (continued)

Article 3

- The chapter is organized on a non-stock basis.
- The description of property and worth of the chapter is \$0.
- The chapter is to be financed under the following general plan: shared membership dollars, contributions, donations, and fundraising.
- The chapter is organized on a directorship basis.
- Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

THE ABOVE ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION WERE ADOPTED BY OUR GOVERNING BODY ON

(Month, day, year)

Signature of Officer

Signature of Officer

Signature of Officer



Statement of Commitment for BirthNetwork National Chapter Leaders

General expectations:

- Support BirthNetwork National's mission, purposes, goals, policies, and programs.
- Attend activities and events sponsored by the chapter and organization whenever possible.
- Join BirthNetwork National as a paid Birth Advocate or Provider member.
- Complete, sign, and submit all required forms in a timely manner.

Initials

Programs:

- Publicize and encourage attendance at informational meetings.
- Assess community needs and execute programs to meet those needs.
- Prepare and submit to BirthNetwork National membership paperwork for the chapter.

Initials

Leadership:

- Recruit and retain sustainable leadership for chapter.
- Personally notify the BirthNetwork National board in writing when you step down as a Chapter Leader by submitting a *Departure Notification* form.
- Complete and submit the *BNN Chapter Leader Annual Recommitment* form each year.

Initials

Membership:

- Solicit and encourage membership among both birth advocates and providers.
- Submit members' information within the back office of BirthNetwork National's website (Wild Apricot) if they join by paper application instead of online.
- Maintain continuous contact with chapter members.

Initials

Avoiding and Resolving Conflicts:

- Serve BirthNetwork National and your chapter as a whole rather than any special interest or constituency.
- Work with co-leaders and BirthNetwork National to resolve all internal problems in an effective and timely manner.
- If informal conflict resolution measures are ineffective, cooperate fully with formal mediation, arbitration, or other legal actions as deemed appropriate by BirthNetwork National's board.

Initials



Statement of Commitment
for BirthNetwork National Chapter Leaders (continued)

Fiduciary Responsibilities:

- Exercise fiscal prudence in the control and transfer of funds for the chapter.
Open and maintain a chapter account at an FDIC-insured financial institution to hold all funds that belong to the chapter.
Submit your chapter's Financial Agreement for BNN Chapters form, detailing your chapter's bank name, address, phone number, and account information to BirthNetwork's Financial Coordinator and provide your chapter's online banking sign-in name and password OR submit hard copies of the account statements quarterly in March, June, September, and December.
Designate "BirthNetwork National" as the beneficiary of the chapter bank account.
Assist in preparing the chapter's financial quarterly statements.
Submit all required paperwork in a timely manner.
Upon closing a chapter, send a check for total of the chapter's account to BirthNetwork National and the final statement from the bank along with a Departure Notification form.
I agree that all money held in the chapter account and raised by the chapter is BirthNetwork money, not personal money of the chapter leaders (with exception of verifiable reimbursement with receipts).
I agree that all money held in the account and raised by the chapter becomes the property of BirthNetwork National upon closure of the chapter.

Initials

Fundraising:

- Consider making an annual gift to the organization according to your personal means.
Participate actively in all fundraising events, programs, and activities.

Initials

Technology:

- Participate in trainings to learn the web-based membership database and website.
Maintain the chapter webpage to communicate information about events to visitors and members.

Initials

Signed:
Chapter:
Date:

Signed:
Chapter:
Date:

Signed:
Chapter:
Date:



BirthNetwork National’s Conflict of Interest Guidelines

POLICY: It is the policy of BirthNetwork National that all officers and Chapter Leaders shall, in actions taken by them on behalf of BirthNetwork National, avoid conflicts and the appearance of such conflicts, between their personal and professional interests of BirthNetwork National.

DEFINITION: A conflict of interest may arise when a volunteer shall be considered to have a personal or professional interest in any educational program, publication, contract, grant, investment decision or similar transaction from which the volunteer will or could receive payments, profits or other remuneration, or if any commercial or non-profit entity with which they are associated may similarly benefit.

Note: BirthNetwork National recognizes that our Chapter Leaders may also be birth professionals as well. If that is the case, you should disclose that information below under “potential conflicts of interest”. Being a birth professional does not preclude anyone from being a BirthNetwork National Chapter Leader. However, Chapter Leaders should understand that they may not purposefully promote their own personal or professional interests at chapter meetings or events while they are within their role as a BirthNetwork National Chapter Leader.

Some examples of conflict would be:

- Wearing a shirt with your business logo on it while you are working at a chapter meeting or event.
- Closing a chapter meeting or event with announcements or information on business events or promotions that you personally have coming up.
- If someone at a meeting asks about specific birth-related services and you give them only your business information.

Examples of appropriate behavior:

- Wearing a BNN Chapter Leader nametag at a chapter meeting or event.
- Closing a chapter meeting or event with a list of all of the events coming up offered by *all* BNN members.
- If someone at a meeting asks about specific birth-related services and you give them information on *all* BNN providers in the area.

I have read and understand the Conflict of Interest Policy, and have identified below any potential conflicts of interest, which may arise in my capacity as a BirthNetwork National officer, committee member, Chapter Leader, consultant or staff person.

Potential conflicts of interest:

Please utilize the back of this form if necessary.

CHAPTER: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____



BirthNetwork National Birth Advocate Membership Application for a brand-new BNN Chapter Leader

BirthNetwork National is a 501(c)(3) organization; all memberships are tax-deductible.

You can also join as a member online at www.birthnetwork.org and purchase the electronic Chapter Leaders Manual online, which will give you immediate membership and access to the manual.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: State, Zip Code: _____

Phone _____ Other Phone: _____

Email: _____

Individual Membership: \$25 per year \$ _____

Chapter Leader Manual: (\$15.00 for an electronic copy) \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Send check or money order (payable to BirthNetwork National) to:

**BirthNetwork National
Attn: Membership Coordinator
PO Box 2370
Birmingham, MI 48012**

Go to <http://www.BirthNetwork.org/membershipapp.htm> to check out all available types of memberships available within BirthNetwork National or to join online.



BirthNetwork National Professional Membership Application

BirthNetwork National is a 501(c)3 organization; all memberships are tax-deductible. All Professional Members will be added to the website and to their local chapter's resource guide (if applicable) unless we notify you otherwise.

BirthNetwork National (or their chapters) does not make referrals and does not endorse any one Provider. BirthNetwork National (or their chapters) reserves the right to exclude/remove a Provider who misrepresents her/his support of BirthNetwork and/or the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI), or one whose services are incompatible with the intent of the organization as deemed by the BirthNetwork National Board of Directors.

1. The following information will appear in the listing as provided here.

Name: _____ Business: _____
Address: _____ City: _____
State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____
Email: _____ Website: _____

2. BirthNetwork National Chapter: _____

3. Please check one:

- New Member
- Renewing Member

4. Membership Type:

- Basic: Includes one listing
- Enhanced: Includes two listing
- Premium: Includes 3-5 listings

5. Membership Level:

- Individual (1 Person): \$50 one listing, \$75 two listings, \$100 3-5 Listings
- Small Group (2-5 People): \$100 one listing, \$150 two listings, \$200 3-5 listings.
- Medium Group (6-9 People): \$300 one listing, \$450 two listings, \$600 3-5 listings.
- Large Group (10+ People): \$500 one listing, \$750 two listings, \$1000 3-5 listings.

6. Membership Listing: If you are a current member and would like to use your existing description(s), check this box. Limit each description of services to 20 words or less. _____

7. Check one or more categories depending on your level of membership.

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Antepartum Doula | <input type="radio"/> Family Practice | <input type="radio"/> Obstetrician |
| <input type="radio"/> Birth Doula | <input type="radio"/> Infant Care | <input type="radio"/> Pediatrician |
| <input type="radio"/> Breastfeeding Support | <input type="radio"/> Massage Therapist | <input type="radio"/> Reflexologist |
| <input type="radio"/> Childbirth Educator | <input type="radio"/> Midwife | <input type="radio"/> Yoga Instructor |
| <input type="radio"/> Chiropractor | <input type="radio"/> Monitrice | <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> Counselor/Therapist | <input type="radio"/> Nutritionist | |

8. I have read and I am adding my name as a supporter of the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI) created by the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services. (www.birthnetwork.org/resources/Documents/MFCI%204%20pages.pdf)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

BirthNetwork National appreciates your dedication to improving maternity care! We look forward to supporting you in your effort to learn about and support mother-friendly care. Please return your Professional Membership Application to your local BirthNetwork National Chapter Leader, along with your check made payable to "BirthNetwork National", or you may mail it to: BirthNetwork National Membership Coordinator, P.O. Box 2370, Birmingham, MI 48012. You may also join online at: <http://www.birthnetwork.org/member.htm>. Questions? Call 1-888-45-BIRTH or email info@birthnetwork.org.



BirthNetwork National's Chapter Leader Policies

The past few years have been a time of tremendous growth for BirthNetwork National. We have had the incredible success of multiplying our numbers of members and chapters and reaching more and more women each year. Now we are facing the challenge of governing an organization that spans 21 states with many chapters in areas far from the in-person support of a BirthNetwork National board member. So that we can be sure that our chapters are complying with the federal laws that apply to nonprofit organizations like us, there are a few important BirthNetwork policy changes that became effective in 2010. With an umbrella nonprofit structure like ours, we have the benefit of sharing our IRS status and paperwork burden but we also have the risk that a chapter that fails to comply with regulations could harm the rest of the group or put our IRS status in jeopardy. ***Therefore, it is vitally important that each new BirthNetwork National chapter--and chapter leaders--review the policies outlined below and submit the appropriate documents (BNN Financial Agreement for BNN Chapters) to Traci Jaketic (BNN's Financial Coordinator) as soon as possible.***

Mail your forms to: BirthNetwork National, Attn: Financial Coordinator, P.O. Box 2370, Birmingham, MI 48012. If you have any questions, please call the toll-free BirthNetwork line at 1-888-45-BIRTH.

BANK ACCOUNT

Each chapter must:

- Open and maintain an account at a FDIC-insured financial institution;
- Keep all chapter funds in that account;
- Submit the bank name, address, phone number, and account information to BirthNetwork National's Financial Coordinator;
- Designate "BirthNetwork National" as the beneficiary of the bank account;
- Provide the chapter's online banking sign-in name and password to BirthNetwork National's Financial Coordinator OR submit hard copies of the account statements quarterly in March, June, September, and December;
- Sign the *BNN Financial Agreement for BNN Chapters* form states that the all of the money held in the chapter bank account and raised by the chapter is BirthNetwork money, not personal money of the Chapter Leaders (with exception of verifiable reimbursement with receipts);
- Sign the attached contract stating that all money held in the account and raised by the chapter becomes the property of BirthNetwork National upon closure of the chapter.

ANNUAL RECOMMITMENT. Each year in March, each BirthNetwork National Chapter Leader will receive a form that must be submitted to confirm that their chapter's information remains the same. The form asks if the Chapter Leaders are committing for another year, include the names and information for new Co-Leaders, indicate whether the IRS contact person has changed, etc. Please be sure to return the form promptly upon receiving it in March.



BirthNetwork National Chapter Leader Policies (continued)

CO-LEADERS. It is the responsibility of all BirthNetwork National Chapter Leaders to recruit and maintain a sustainable chapter leadership team. Each chapter must have at least two Co-Leaders and the most successful chapters are always working to groom new leadership through extra contact with interested chapter members and providing volunteer opportunities to keep active members engaged. It is the responsibility of the current leaders to make the chapter sustainable over time. Waiting until you are burned out is often too late to find a replacement leader.

TRANSITIONS. When Chapter Leaders step down from leadership positions within chapters, each has the responsibility to personally notify BirthNetwork National that they are leaving. It is required that upon stepping down, each co-leader must submit a *Departure Notification* form to the national board. If you are the last Chapter Leader to leave a chapter as it closes, then you are required to close the chapter's bank account, send a check for balance of the account to BirthNetwork National and mail the final statement from the bank along with your *Departure Notification* form.

Each Chapter Leader will be held accountable for the status of their chapter. If all of the Chapter Leaders fail to provide the appropriate documentation to BirthNetwork National, then there are several measures that will be taken. First, the chapter's contact information will be removed from BirthNetwork National's website and database. Second, BirthNetwork National will notify the IRS of the chapter's downgraded status and it will be removed from the list of BirthNetwork subordinates. This means that the chapter will no longer enjoy the benefits of the group non-profit status, which will put all fundraising in jeopardy as donors and grantors will not receive the tax deductible status of their contributions. Lastly, each Chapter Leader may be held personally liable for their breach of contract and/or for other causes of action appropriate to the situation.

Please know that we are doing everything in our power to ensure that BirthNetwork runs as a professional organization fully complying with all the laws that govern non-profit work.

Thank you so much for the work that you do mother-friendly maternity care in your area and thank you for helping us meet our IRS requirements by submitting all the necessary information and paperwork as soon as possible.

Sincerely,
BirthNetwork National's Board of Directors



BirthNetwork National Financial Agreement for BNN Chapters

Chapter: _____

Chapter Leader(s) Name(s): _____

Main contact person: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Chapter email address: _____

Chapter EIN: _____

Financial institution where BirthNetwork National chapter account is located:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Account number: _____

Online banking sign-in name: _____

Online banking password: _____

I agree to:

- Designate "BirthNetwork National" as the beneficiary of the chapter account.
- Assist in preparing the chapter's financial reporting statements.
- Submit all required paperwork in a timely manner.
- Upon closing a chapter, send a check for the total of the chapter's account to BirthNetwork National and a copy of the final statement from the bank along with BNN's *Departure Notification* form.
- Confirm that all money held in the chapter account and raised by the chapter is BirthNetwork National money, not personal money of the Chapter Leaders (with exception of verifiable reimbursement with receipts).

I agree that:

- All money held in the account and raised by the chapter becomes the property of BirthNetwork National upon closure of the chapter.

Signature

Date

Name: _____

Status within chapter: _____

Personal Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____



The Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative

Ten Steps of the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative for Mother-Friendly Hospitals, Birth Centers, and Home Birth Services

First, you should learn as much as you can about all your choices. There are many different ways of caring for a mother and her baby during labor and birth. Birthing care that is better and healthier for mothers and babies is called "mother-friendly." Some birth places or settings are more mother-friendly than others.

A group of experts in birthing care came up with this list of 10 things to look for and ask about. Medical research supports all of these things. These are also the best ways to be mother-friendly. When you are deciding where to have your baby, you'll probably be choosing from different places such as: birth center, hospital, or home birth service.

Here's what you should expect, and ask for, in your birth experience. Be sure to find out how the people you talk with handle these ten issues about caring for you and your baby. You may want to ask the questions below to help you learn more.

1. Ask, "Who can be with me during labor and birth?"

Mother-friendly birth centers, hospitals, and home birth services will let a birthing mother decide whom she wants to have with her during the birth. This includes fathers, partners, children, other family members, or friends. They will also let a birthing mother have with her a person who has special training in helping women cope with labor and birth. This person is called a doula or labor support person. She never leaves the birthing mother alone. She encourages her, comforts her, and helps her understand what's happening to her.

They will have midwives as part of their staff so that a birthing mother can have a midwife with her if she wants to.

2. Ask, "What happens during a normal labor and birth in your setting?"

If they give mother-friendly care, they will tell you how they handle every part of the birthing process. For example, how often do they give the mother a drug to speed up the birth? Or do they let labor and birth usually happen on its own timing?

They will also tell you how often they do certain procedures. For example, they will have a record of the percentage of C-sections (Cesarean births) they do every year. If the number is too high, you'll want to consider having your baby in another place or with another doctor or midwife.

Here are some numbers we recommend you ask about.

- They should *not* try to start labor for more than 1 in 10 women (10%).
- They should not do an episiotomy (ee-pee-zee-AH-tummy) on more than 1 in 5 women (20%). They should be trying to bring that number down. (An episiotomy is a cut in the opening to the vagina to make it larger for birth. It is not necessary most of the time.)
- They should not do C-sections on more than 1 in 10 women (10%) if it's a community hospital. The rate should be 15% or less in hospitals that care for many high-risk mothers and babies.

A C-section is a major operation in which a doctor cuts through the mother's stomach into her womb and removes the baby through the opening. Mothers who have had a C-section can often

have future babies normally. Look for a birth place in which 6 out of 10 women (60%) or more of the mothers who have had C-sections go on to have their other babies through the birth canal.

3. Ask, "How do you allow for differences in culture and beliefs?"

Mother-friendly birth centers, hospitals, and home birth services are sensitive to the mother's culture. They know that mothers and families have differing beliefs, values, and customs.

For example, you may have a custom that only women may be with you during labor and birth. Or perhaps your beliefs include a religious ritual to be done after birth. There are many other examples that may be very important to you. If the place and the people are mother-friendly, they will support you in doing what you want to do. Before labor starts tell your doctor or midwife special things you want.

4. Ask, "Can I walk and move around during labor? What position do you suggest for birth?"

In mother-friendly settings, you can walk around and move about as you choose during labor. You can choose the positions that are most comfortable and work best for you during labor and birth. (There may be a medical reason for you to be in a certain position.) Mother-friendly settings almost never put a woman flat on her back with her legs up in stirrups for the birth.

5. Ask, "How do you make sure everything goes smoothly when my nurse, doctor, midwife, or agency need to work with each other?"

Ask, "Can my doctor or midwife come with me if I have to be moved to another place during labor? Can you help me find people or agencies in my community who can help me before and after the baby is born?"

Mother-friendly places and people will have a specific plan for keeping in touch with the other people who are caring for you. They will talk to others who give you birth care. They will help you find people or agencies in your community to help you. For example, they may put you in touch with someone who can help you with breastfeeding.

6. Ask, "What things do you normally do to a woman in labor?"

Experts say some methods of care during labor and births are better and healthier for mothers and babies. Medical research shows us which methods of care are better and healthier. Mother-friendly settings only use methods that have been proven to be best by scientific evidence. Sometimes birth centers, hospitals, and home birth services use methods that are not proven to be best for the mother or the baby. For example, research has shown it's usually not helpful to break the bag of waters.

Here is a list of things we recommend you ask about. They do not help and may hurt healthy mothers and babies.

They are not proven to be best for the mother or baby and are not mother-friendly.

- They should not keep track of the baby's heart rate all the time with a machine (called an electronic fetal monitor). Instead it is best to have your nurse or midwife listen to the baby's heart from time to time.
- They should not break your bag of waters early in labor.
- They should not use an IV (a needle put into your vein to give you fluids).
- They should not tell you that you can't eat or drink during labor.
- They should not shave you.
- They should not give you an enema.

A birth center, hospital, or home birth service that does these things for most of the mothers is not mother-friendly. Remember, these should not be used without a special medical reason.

7. Ask, "How do you help mothers stay as comfortable as they can be? Besides drugs, how do you help mothers relieve the pain of labor?"

The people who care for you should know how to help you cope with labor. They should know about ways of dealing with your pain that don't use drugs. They should suggest such things as changing your position, relaxing in a warm bath, having a massage, and using music. These are called comfort measures.

Comfort measures help you handle your labor more easily and help you feel more in control. The people who care for you will not try to persuade you to use a drug for pain unless you need it to take care of a special medical problem. All drugs affect the baby.

8. Ask, "What if my baby is born early or has special problems?"

Mother-friendly places and people will encourage mothers and families to touch, hold, breastfeed, and care for their babies as much as they can. They will encourage this even if your baby is born early or has a medical problem at birth. (However, there may be a special medical reason you shouldn't hold and care for your baby.)

9. Ask, "Do you circumcise baby boys?"

Medical research does not show a need to circumcise baby boys. It is painful and risky. Mother-friendly birth places discourage circumcision unless it is for religious reasons.

10. Ask, "How do you help mothers who want to breastfeed?"

The World Health Organization made this list of ways birth services support breastfeeding.

- They tell all pregnant mothers why and how to breastfeed.
- They help you start breastfeeding within 1 hour after your baby is born.
- They show you how to breastfeed. And they show you how to keep your milk coming in even if you have to be away from your baby for work or other reasons.
- Newborns should have only breast milk. (However, there may be a medical reason they cannot have it right away.)
- They encourage you and the baby to stay together all day and all night. This is called "rooming-in."
- They encourage you to feed your baby whenever he or she wants to nurse, rather than at certain times.
- They should not give pacifiers ("dummies" or "soothers") to breastfed babies.
- They encourage you to join a group of mothers who breastfeed. They tell you how to contact a group near you.
- They have a written policy on breastfeeding. All the employees know about and use the ideas in the policy.
- They teach employees the skills they need to carry out these steps.