



**Virginia Doula Task Force Meeting**

June 1, 2026  
12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

**Meeting Location: Virtual**

**Meeting Minutes**

<b>Council Member Attendance</b>	<b>Voting Record Y=Yes, N=No, A=Abstain</b>	<b>Voting Record Y=Yes, N=No, A=Abstain</b>	<b>Voting Record Y=Yes, N=No, A=Abstain</b>	<b>Voting Record Y=Yes, N=No, A=Abstain</b>
<b>Bold</b> = Present <i>Italicized</i> = Absent	Approve minutes from 3/2/2026	Nominee: Melonie Suber	Nominee: Nataki Hill	Nominee: Dana Williams
<b>Voting Members</b>				
<b>Adrienne Hill</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Dr. Nichole Wardlaw</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Lashrecse Aird</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Basmah Karriem</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Lydia English</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Taja Iglesias</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Shanteny Jackson</b> <i>(present after the vote)</i>				
<b>Ex Officio Members</b>				
<b>Lauren Kozlowski</b> as VDH designee				
<b>Sonya Kibler/Maryssa Sadler</b> as DMAS designee				
<b>Vacant Seats</b>				
Clinician x 2				
Doula/Doula Org x 4				
Consumer x 2				

**Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Staff Support:** Consuelo Staton, Art Thomas, Jennifer Macdonald, Emily Yeatts, Dr. Vanessa Walker Harris, and Lauryn Walker

### **Task Force Business – Consuelo Staton and Basmah Karriem**

- The meeting was called to order at 12:05pm.
- Roll call by Consuelo Staton. A quorum was achieved.
- Meeting minutes from 3/2/2026 were shared with group members, Basmah Karriem stated the motion, Dr. Wardlaw seconded it, and the vote to approve the minutes was adopted.

### **Virginia Doula Task Force Nominations and Vote – Consuelo Staton and Basmah Karriem**

- The Task Force currently holds five vacancies. Consuelo presented three candidates for member review and voting.
- Melonie Suber, Certified Nurse Midwife - nominated to serve as a Clinical Provider
  - Motion passed with 7 yes votes, 0 no votes
- Nataki Hill, Doula – nominated to serve as a Doula
  - Motion passed with 6 yes votes, 0 no votes
- Dana Williams, Director of Programs of Birth in Color RVA – nominated to serve as Birth in Color RVA representative.
  - Motion passed with 6 yes votes, 0 no votes

### **VDH Admin Update – Consuelo Staton**

- Consuelo Staton announced updates to The Virginia Department of Health’s state-certified doula webpage, which now features newly added doula training organizations and direct links to the VCB webpage.
- Additionally, VDH, the Doula Association of Virginia, and the Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative are launching a mixed-methods research study this month. Managed by PhD candidate, Farnese Motto and Primary Investigator, Dr. Kim, the study will evaluate how doulas communicate with clients during Medicaid-covered prenatal visits. The team will gather data using brief surveys and audio recordings from 30 perinatal visits.

### **DMAS Update – Sonya Kibler**

- Sonya Kibler reported that DMAS is updating online state certifications forms to reflect recent legislative mandates. These changes expand Medicaid reimbursement coverage from 6 months to 12 months postpartum and increase the maximum visits from 4 to 6.
- Rappahannock Area Health Department, RAHD, will host a virtual doula training workshop on June 10 (12:00–4:00PM) and June 13 (12:30–4:30PM). The workshop will feature DMAS and VDH representatives who will provide an overview of the history of the State Doula and Medicaid Doula Support initiative and discuss how to become a state certified doula and Medicaid provider. The workshop will feature Julie Robinson, doula organization and state certified doula, presenting “Medicaid Made Easy Billing”. The workshop will offer continuing education units (CEUs), Nakita Hill will also speak on How to obtain a NPI number.

### **Legislative Update- Senator Lashrecse Aird**

- Senator Lashrecse Aird provided a brief overview of the Virginia Omnibus Act 11 2026 legislative package, which targets infant and maternal health issues. The final execution of these initiatives depends heavily on budget investments still awaiting finalization in the House and Senate.

**Discussion: Virginia Certification Board (VCB) Doula Trainer document revision and review – Basmah Karriem and Taja Iglesias. (Treasure Gallagher, VCB Executive Director and Myah Douglas, VCB Director of Training)**

- Treasurer Gallagher and Myah Douglas, VCB, led detailed conversation on the critical need to standardize criteria for state-certified doula training vendors.
- The VCB currently monitors roughly 19 to 20 approved training vendors, with 15 more applications on the wait list. VCB temporarily closed the application submission process to evaluate existing structures. Gallagher highlighted a lack of consistency across these organizations regarding program length, format (asynchronous vs. synchronous), and overall curriculum metrics. To ensure community protection and quality assurance, VCB is recommending a standard rubric and scoresheet for training approval.
- Currently, Virginia law mandates that doulas obtain both their initial training and their renewal CEUs exclusively through an approved training vendor. Task Force members noted that many approved vendors do not offer standalone CEUs, creating an unnecessary barrier to recertification. Dr. Nichole Wardlaw volunteered to lead an effort to investigate streamlining this pathway.
- Basmah Karriem reviewed the draft VCB vendor's expectations, requesting that the mandatory training frequency be lowered from three times a year to two times a year to protect small community workers. She also requested lowering minimum enrollment mandates from 10 students to 5 students per session to foster high-quality, intimate learning environments.
- This process remains unfinalized. Because core training hours are tied directly to state regulations, changing the hours requires a long-term regulatory amendment process through the Board of Health. VCB intends to use the sub-topic rubrics to insert community requirements into existing hour constraints as a short-term solution. VCB aims to have the finalized, strengthened process running by July 2026.

**Vote on the VCB document revisions -- Basmah Karriem and Taja Iglesias**

- Task Force members collectively noted that the state-mandated 60-hour breakdown acts more like a case-management framework than hands-on community doula care. Taja Iglesias and Basmah Karriem presented a formal proposal to reallocate the 60 hours to better emphasize community needs without changing the total hour requirement.
- A new subcommittee was recommended by Dr. Nichole Wardlaw to review the VCB rubrics.

**Discussion: Doula Task Force Work Plan January-December 2026 update – Basmah Karriem**

- Did not discuss

**Discussion: What's Next? Topics to consider – Basmah Karriem**

- Did not discuss

**Public Comment Period**

- Lisa Brown submitted a letter of concern (see attached) to the Task Force regarding the inclusion of "mandated reporter" language in the VCB ethics and curriculum documents. She clarified that under Virginia Code Section 63.2-1509, doulas are not legally classified as mandatory reporters. Forcing this designation onto doulas creates a legal contradiction, legal penalties, and destroys the sacred trust required for community birth work.
- Jessica Alicea raised concerns over how Virginia defines "community protection." She emphasized that top-down, bureaucratic standards fail to save Black and brown mothers who are dying at double the rate of white women in the state. She demanded measurable, community-led safety goals by 2027 and stressed that the current Medicaid reimbursement rate (\$859) is unsustainable for making a living wage.

**Adjournment – Basmah Karriem**

- Meeting adjourned at 2:12pm by Basmah Karriem.
- Next meeting will be on September 14, 2026.