

LICENSED MIDWIFERY IN FLORIDA

- Licensed Midwives (LMs) have been practicing in Florida since 1982
- There are currently 212 active LMs in Florida.¹
- Since 1996, LMs have delivered more than 44,900 babies in the State of Florida.²
- Florida LMs:
 - Work in licensed birth centers, maternity health clinics, and private homebirth practices
 - Care for low-risk families
 - Maintain certification in both CPR and Neonatal Resuscitation.
 - Use and maintain emergency equipment, supplies, and medicines
 - Take insurance, Medicaid, and payment arrangements
 - Carry malpractice insurance as required by F.S. 467 and F.S. 456.

THE CHALLENGE

- In 2016, ACOG and FMA expressed concern about LMs and sought to change Chapter 467, the Midwifery Practice Act.
- LMs raised \$30,000 to acquire a lobbyist who worked collaboratively to defeat the challenge to Chapter 467, and no bill was passed.
- In 2017, SB510 was introduced to address Adverse Outcome Reporting for out-of-hospital birth; LMs and lobbyists helped write this draft and support this bill. It was passed March 19, 2018.
- **In 2020, major challenges are anticipated and we have word that a bill is going to be introduced that regulates Out of Hospital birth statewide. We have demonstrated our desire to pursue safe and well-regulated birth options with the support of SB510. We want to ensure that whatever comes next is guided by our input and involvement in the process.**

WHAT YOUR LICENSED MIDWIFE NEEDS

- Lobbyist support in Tallahassee. OB-GYNs have lobbyists that represent their interests; LMs do too.
- LM lobbyists' fees are \$33,000 per year.
- Donations to the lobbyist fund: www.FLmidwifefoundation.org, "Donate Today"
- Love your licensed midwife? Share your story on social media!
- Attend local LM fundraising events; Share them on social media
- Contact your local legislator. Email/phone tips on page 2.
- Be prepared to write, call, and visit your legislator if your midwife needs you.

¹ Numbers are dynamic and reflect the current statistics as of the day published.

<https://appsmqa.doh.state.fl.us/MQASearchServices/HealthCareProviders>, Accessed 10-21-2019

² Numbers are dynamic and reflect the current statistics as of the day published.

<https://appsmqa.doh.state.fl.us/MQASearchServices/HealthCareProviders> 2. Florida Charts: <http://www.floridacharts.com/charts/BirthQuery.aspx>
Accessed 10-21-2019

GUIDELINES FOR LEGISLATIVE VISITS

FINDING YOUR LEGISLATORS

- Find your State Representative:
 - <http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/myrepresentative.aspx>
- Find your State Senator:
 - <https://www.flsenate.gov/senators/find>
- Type in your address and zip code to determine your State Representative and State Senator. All contact information will be shown on the site.

COMMUNICATING WITH LEGISLATORS

- Request a “My Baby Was Born in Your District” postcard from your midwife to send to your local legislator.
- Sample email for your legislators:

Dear Mr./Ms. Legislator,

I am a constituent who lives and works in your district. I also used a licensed midwife, (insert midwife name), as my care provider for my pregnancy and the birth of my child. My midwife is an important part of my healthcare team, and I loved my experience. (Insert details as desired here). It is very important to me and my family that the practice of licensed midwifery remains active and protected by Chapter 467. If you have any questions, please contact me at (insert phone number).

Thank you,
[YOUR NAME]
- Sample telephone script for your legislators:

Hello, my name is [YOUR NAME], I am calling today to speak with you about the importance of licensed midwifery in Florida. I had my baby safely at home with a licensed midwife, and it is very important for me that the option for safe, out-of-hospital care remain protected by Chapter 467, the Midwifery Practice Act. There are bills that relate to Out-of-Hospital Birth and licensed midwifery in the State Senate and State House in the upcoming legislative season. Thank you for your support of the birthing options of women in your district.
- Talking points, just in case they ask you questions.
 - Speak about YOUR experience with an LM
 - Discuss what it means to you to have a trained midwife and choice in setting for your care and birth.