



The Birth Companion Program

Established in 1990, the Birth Companion Program is an award-winning, volunteer-based, parent support program. We provide free one on one prenatal, labour/delivery, postnatal and parenting support to marginalized and at risk families in the Ottawa area. Our support increases the knowledge of additional support services in our community, provides referrals where necessary, helps to build confidence and self-efficacy in parenting and provides opportunities for families to connect with one another.

The Birth Companion Program is offered by extensively screened and trained volunteers, who receive the knowledge and skills necessary to provide nonjudgmental, culturally sensitive, physical and emotional support to families. We serve families who are new to Canada, young parents, single parents, those living in the shelter system, on financial assistance, those with mental health and substance use challenges, abuse survivors and many more.

Our goal is for people to feel confident, independent and empowered during pregnancy, labour and parenthood.

Volunteer Birth Companion Position Description

A Birth Companion is a mature individual who identifies as female, is over the age of 18, and has an interest and/or experience with perinatal wellbeing and working with at risk populations. The volunteer commits to providing either in person and/or virtual support to pregnant people during the last trimester of pregnancy, during their labour & delivery and up to 6 weeks postpartum. Our goal is to help families prepare mentally, physically and emotionally for the birth of their baby, connect with community resources/support services and increase self awareness and confidence in their parenting skills.

A Birth Companion is sensitive, compassionate, flexible, dependable and non-judgmental. They require great patience, understanding and commitment.



Volunteer Birth Companion Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice active listening at all times • Respect the client and their circumstances by not imposing personal standards, beliefs, religion or values • Be sensitive, understanding and respectful of cultural differences, birth practices and parenting styles • Identify and build on the strengths of the client • Maintain consistent contact with the client both pre and postnatally via the method of the client's choosing, ie. in person, text, phone, email, Zoom etc. • Empower the client to seek out appropriate solutions by exploring community supports and resources, reassessing needs throughout the duration of the match • Encourage the client to speak on their own behalf, ask for clarification and direct questions to primary care givers and hospital staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully complete the 20 hour Birth Companion training, submit necessary volunteer paperwork and complete the post training interview • Maintain strict confidentiality at all times and adhere to program policies • Maintain regular contact with BPCP staff and communicate any concerns or difficulties as they arise • Be aware of personal and program boundaries and how to maintain a healthy, empowering yet professional relationship with the client • Be clear on the scope of practice within the program • Ensure the necessary match paperwork is completed and submitted by the due date • Make a minimum 1 year commitment to the program • Attend a minimum of one professional development opportunity provided by the BPCP per year • Participate in the annual Touch a Truck fundraiser



Birth Companion Application

Date (mm/dd/yyyy):	
First Name:	Last Name:
Address (including postal code):	
Cell # *Please note: Access to a cell phone is mandatory due to the on-call nature of the program.	Emergency Contact Name/Phone #:
Email:	
Date of Birth *at least 18 yrs of age* (mm/dd/yyyy):	Age:
Languages fluently spoken:	
Have you read the Program & Position Description for the Birth Companion Program?	
What personal/professional or volunteer experiences have you had that would make you an asset to the Birth Companion Program? Please include any formal education or training.	
What personal attributes/qualities do you possess that would make you an asset to the Birth Companion Program?	
Due to the on-call nature and unpredictability of birth, Birth Companion volunteers are on call for the birth 2 weeks before and up to 2 weeks after the due date. What barriers both personally and/or professionally, do you foresee with this level of required flexibility?	
Are there any medical conditions or general concerns that might impact your ability to perform your duties as outlined in the Position Description. ie. Underlying health conditions, specific topics/issues of concern, etc.?	
Do you have any limitations that might prevent you from providing <u>physical</u> support during the length of a labour?	

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES			
Please provide 3 professional references only (not friends/family) who can comment on your character as well as your work ethic and suitability within the Birth Companion Program. . Please include all requested contact info.			
Reference #1			
First Name		Last Name	
Position		Agency	
Home #	Cell #	Work #	
Email			
In what professional capacity do you know this person and why have you chosen them as a reference?			
Reference #2			
First Name		Last Name	
Position		Agency	
Home #	Cell #	Work #	
Email			
In what professional capacity do you know this person and why have you chosen them as a reference?			
Reference #3			
First Name		Last Name	
Position		Agency	
Home #	Cell #	Work #	
Email			
In what professional capacity do you know this person and why have you chosen them as a reference?			

Please note: Successful applicants will be contacted by email to schedule an interview.

I confirm that all of the information provided in this application is true.

Printed Name	Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
Signature	

Thank you for your interest in joining the Birth Companion Team!