

# RESPECTFUL CARE



These standards were created to inform, educate, and support people giving birth – people like you. You have a human right to respectful, safe, and quality care during your birthing experience. We encourage you to share and discuss this information with your current or potential health care providers and take a tour of their facilities. This will help you decide with whom and where to give birth.



This document was created by the Illinois Maternal Health Task Force's CASE-Communications Subcommittee based on the NYC Respectful Care at Birth Brochure.

It has been shortened for translation to a graphic form. This document was originally informed by community gatherings and created by the New York City Health Department's Sexual and Reproductive Justice Community Engagement Group (SRJ CEG). For more information, search for SRJ at [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health)

## EDUCATION

Know your health care providers and birthing options. Ask about the practices and guidelines used at the place where you choose to give birth, the resources they provide for issues like preparing for childbirth, your birth options for delivery, feeding your baby, and referrals for benefits and services.

## QUALITY OF CARE

You have the right to receive the highest quality of healthcare. This includes timely attention to your needs throughout the birthing experience, safe, clean, private, and quiet spaces to birth and recover, providers who are skilled in best practices, and polite staff during the birthing process. You can request different staff during the birth if you are displeased or uncomfortable.

## SUPPORT

You have the right to receive support during pregnancy, labor, childbirth, and after childbirth. This includes having the people you choose present during delivery and receiving support services during your birthing experience.

## DECISION-MAKING

You have the right to decide what happens with your body and your baby! You have a say in which medical procedures you will allow, where you will give birth, how to feed your baby, whether to hold your baby immediately after birth, whether to be present for the baby's medical tests, keeping records, and understanding the benefits and possible risks of these decisions.

## INFORMED CONSENT

Know your rights and make your own decisions about your healthcare. You have a right to "informed consent." This includes complete, accurate, judgment-free explanations in language you can understand. You have the right to take your time deciding about your birth plan, and the right to include your support team in your decisions, change your mind, and have your new decisions respected.

## DIGNITY AND NONDISCRIMINATION

You have the right to be treated with dignity and respect during pregnancy, labor, childbirth, and after childbirth. This includes treating you and your family fairly, regardless of life circumstances, decisions, and your identities. It also includes using the gender pronouns you prefer for yourself and your baby; having an interpreter available so that you and your provider can understand each other, and lastly, acknowledging all of your concerns about your healthcare.

