

How would I know the workshop I am taking is DONA International-approved?

Find DONA International approved workshops on our [online locators](#). This way you can be sure that the Trainer is DONA approved.

2. Do I have to be a member of DONA International to order my Certification Packet?

No, but DONA International members get a discounted rate when purchasing their packets, and you must be a member at the time you submit your packet for review. After you are a [certified](#) doula your contact information will be on our web site if you desire.

3. I have been working as a postpartum doula for years. Can I get credit for that experience and shorten the certification process?

Everyone becomes a DONA International certified doula in the same manner. The reason we decided to certify postpartum doulas was to ensure the standardization of care within our organization. The only way to ensure to families that the letters PCD (DONA) after postpartum doulas' names share a common knowledge base, code of ethics and standards of practice is to require postpartum doulas to be trained in the same way.

4. I was trained by a trainer who is now DONA International approved. Can I now be grandmothere in as a postpartum doula? Do I still have to pay to attend a DONA International-approved training workshop?

In order to achieve standardization of training and give meaning to certification, we do not grandmother in doulas on the basis of previous training. However, some DONA International-approved postpartum doula trainers offer scholarships or reduced fees for people they have trained in the past. Trainers set and collect their own workshop fees. Contact your trainer and ask her about her policy.

5. I am certified by another organization as a postpartum doula. What do I have to do to be certified by DONA International?

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6. For the requirement of attendance at a breastfeeding course, do the classes offered by hospitals to prepare mothers to breastfeed qualify?

They will meet the requirement if when you observe the class, you are not an expectant parent and if the breastfeeding classes are not for less than three hours of instruction. A letter or certificate from the instructor must accompany your application for DONA International certification, as well as the instructor's credentials and a course outline or course objectives. Ideally, the class that you take will be intended for professionals, rather than for parents.

If you are unable to find a local course, consider an online course like the one offered by LER at: http://www.leron-line.com/Basic_Lactation_Management.htm

7. I have attended a breastfeeding peer counselor training class. Will this meet the breastfeeding education class requirement for postpartum doula certification?

Yes, if you can provide a copy of the certificate and an outline of the course work. Both must accompany your application for DONA International postpartum doula certification.

8. How long does a candidate have to complete the certification requirements?

When you receive your certification packet from DONA International, there is a date stamped on the inside. You have two years from that date to complete the certification process. If your packet expires, you may purchase a one-time, six-month extension for \$10. After the six-month extension, if you do not complete the process, you will have to purchase another certification packet. You can request your packet either before attending a DONA International-approved workshop or after. You must complete your certification requirements within four years of attending a DONA International-approved Postpartum Doula Training Workshop.

9. How much do the DONA International-approved postpartum doula training workshops cost?

Workshops vary in cost, depending on the trainer and the expenses involved in hosting a training. Trainers set their own fees. Some fees include tuition, books, meals, etc. Contact your trainer to ask what is included.

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10. In the population I work with, breastfeeding is uncommon. Do I still need two out of three certifying experiences to be with breastfeeding mothers?

Yes. It is an important part of your education. When you do work with a breastfeeding family, you will be better able to support and educate them if you have had some experience.

11. I did not get a release signature from one of my clients. Can I still use this postpartum support experience for certification?

To accept a postpartum support experience, we must have a signature releasing the information.

[Download the Confidentiality Release Form](#) 

12. What are you looking for in the essays that I need to write about my postpartum support experiences?

For each experience, you must provide a written description of the experience, including the services you provided, the family's reaction to your support and what you learned.

13. What are you looking for in the essays on the value of postpartum support?

The idea here is to help you clarify for yourself and others how you view your role as a postpartum doula. Skills and knowledge are extremely important, but so are a sense of purpose and an understanding of the essence of doula support.

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14. How do I verify my DONA International membership?

When you mail your application for certification to DONA International, you must be a current member. You can verify your membership by checking the mailing label on the latest issue of DONA International. The expiration date of your membership appears in the upper right corner of the mailing label.

15. Where should I send my completed certification packet and application fee?

Send your certification packet and application fee to:

DONA International
P.O. Box 626
Jasper, IN 47547

If you send your packet with another carrier besides the U.S. Postal Service, send it to:

DONA International
811 Newton St.
Jasper, IN 47546

***Please do not send it signature required on receipt. You may send a self-addressed, stamped postcard and we will acknowledge receipt.**

16. After I send in my completed certification packet, when will I hear from DONA International?

Certification usually takes about two months.

17. I want to be both a birth doula and a postpartum doula. Should I become a birth doula first?

It is not required. However, this is a decision that you need to make based on your own situation. You might choose one first because of the availability or location of training, or because one is more marketable than the other in your region. Another option would be to work on them at the same time. Some of the readings overlap, and if you are hired for postpartum, you might find it easier to be invited to attend the birth, and vice-versa.

18. Do I have to certify as both kinds of doulas?

DONA International does not require that doulas become certified in both areas. You can become a birth doula, a postpartum doula or both. This is a decision that you need to make based on your own situation and interests.