



Birthingway College of Midwifery

4997 SW Normandy Place, Beaverton, OR 97005
503-760-3131 | birthingway.edu

December 2, 2020

Re: Informed Choice for participating in clinical training during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Students,

The intent of this document is to provide guidance and information about options for navigating clinical training as we continue to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize that guidelines and local situations are changing rapidly, so we remind you to frequently check the Birthingway Coronavirus Update page on our website: <https://birthingway.edu/coronavirus-update/> for the latest information we can find. We also suggest that you keep up with local and state requirements regarding mask use, closures, physical distancing, and other public health measures.

Current Legal and Safety Status

In response to increased levels of community spread, Multnomah County is on a four-week freeze in re-opening that began on November 18 and will last through December 16. This does not affect healthcare workers and settings, but students in clinical training should be aware that the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19 is more present than ever and to follow all safety guidelines.

Students considering providing care during this pandemic should consider their level of experience and whether their presence will be helpful to their preceptor. Students should also think about their own and their family's health risk and the potential of becoming a vector when making their decision. If they do choose to provide care, students should adhere to all PPE recommendations including use of masks, gloves, and frequent handwashing with soap and water.

Current recommendations are NOT to provide care to anyone experiencing respiratory symptoms, even mild ones. If a client is having symptoms of COVID-19, then the client should contact their primary care provider so that the provider can assess whether in-person treatment is necessary and a referral to the hospital is warranted. Preceptors and students should not provide services to clients if the provider or student have any symptoms of potential infection with coronavirus, even mild ones, or have had any presumptive exposure.

Individual preceptors may create more stringent requirements for their practices.

This is a new virus for humans to cope with, which means that we have no immunity developed yet. It is not "just like the flu," being both more contagious and more deadly than influenza. Being young is not a protection. Students who choose to continue to provide care must be aware that Birthingway does not have the ability to protect them from exposure.

What we know at this time is that asymptomatic people CAN and DO spread the virus. That is why social distancing and staying home as much as possible is such an effective tool for limiting spread to manageable levels. Birthingway encourages our students, staff, faculty, and other community members to monitor and follow recommendations on the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov/), as well as

local and state health departments, and midwifery professional organizations.

Clinical Training

As of July 15, 2020, “NARM will allow two virtual clinicals to apply to the Continuity of Care clinical requirements for CPM candidates for each Continuity of Care Client: one prenatal in the final trimester and one postpartum done anytime between 24 hours and six weeks post birth. Guidelines for documentation are available at NARM.org.” All other clinical requirements for NARM certification remain unchanged.

Currently, Birthingway WILL ALLOW students to count virtual prenatal and postpartum appointments as direct client care for Clinical Training Credits (CTC) IF they are a full participant in the appointment. All labor, birth, and immediate postpartum care must be provided in person for the experience to count for either NARM or Birthingway graduation requirements.

While it is tempting to skirt requirements during times of stress and provider shortages, Birthingway is clear that preceptors and students must continue to adhere to all current policies regarding supervision. In addition, preceptors must not penalize students for choosing not to attend clients in-person.

Points of Understanding

- Birthingway does not require students to travel or to provide any clinical care during this time of increased risk from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- As a healthcare worker, you are under increased risk for contracting COVID-19. Birthingway is not liable for any outcome or expenses of students who might become infected with COVID-19 as a result of providing clinical care.
- We ask that all students in clinical training take a moment to assess the possible risk to yourself and your loved ones and to discuss these and other safety issues with your preceptor.
- During this pandemic, you are still required to adhere to your scope of practice as a midwifery student, as outlined by Birthingway, including requirements for direct supervision, and by the regulations in the state where you are practicing.
- Birthingway staff are available if you have questions.
- You have the choice not to participate in Clinical Training this term. Please connect with your advisor about taking a Leave of Absence if you choose to stop your clinical training due to the pandemic.

Wishing you continued health and well-being,

Holly Scholles
President

Heather Hack-Sullivan
Midwifery Program Coordinator