

HOUSE BILL 1202

J3, J1

EMERGENCY BILL

1lr2917

By: **Delegate Wilkins**

Introduced and read first time: February 8, 2021

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Hospitals and Birth Centers – COVID–19 Visitation Policies – Doulas**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring that a doula be authorized to be present with a woman during
4 labor, delivery, and postpartum recovery under certain circumstances; prohibiting a
5 doula from being considered a support person or visitor under certain circumstances;
6 defining a certain term; making this Act an emergency measure; providing for the
7 termination of this Act; and generally relating to doulas and hospitals and birthing
8 centers.

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
10 That:

11 (a) In this section, “doula” means a birth companion who provides personal and
12 physical nonclinical support to a woman during the woman’s pregnancy, childbirth, and
13 postpartum experience.

14 (b) During a woman’s labor, delivery, and postpartum recovery, a doula shall be
15 authorized to be present with the woman, and may not be considered a support person or
16 visitor for purposes of restrictions imposed by a hospital or a freestanding birth center on
17 the amount of visitors or support persons due to COVID–19, if the doula:

18 (1) is not presently experiencing any symptoms of COVID–19; and

19 (2) can provide evidence of a negative COVID–19 test result from a test
20 that was administered within the immediately preceding 3 days.

21 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency
22 measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has
23 been passed by a ye and nay vote supported by three–fifths of all the members elected to
24 each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is
25 enacted. It shall remain effective through July 31, 2023, and, at the end of July 31, 2023,

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and
2 of no further force and effect.