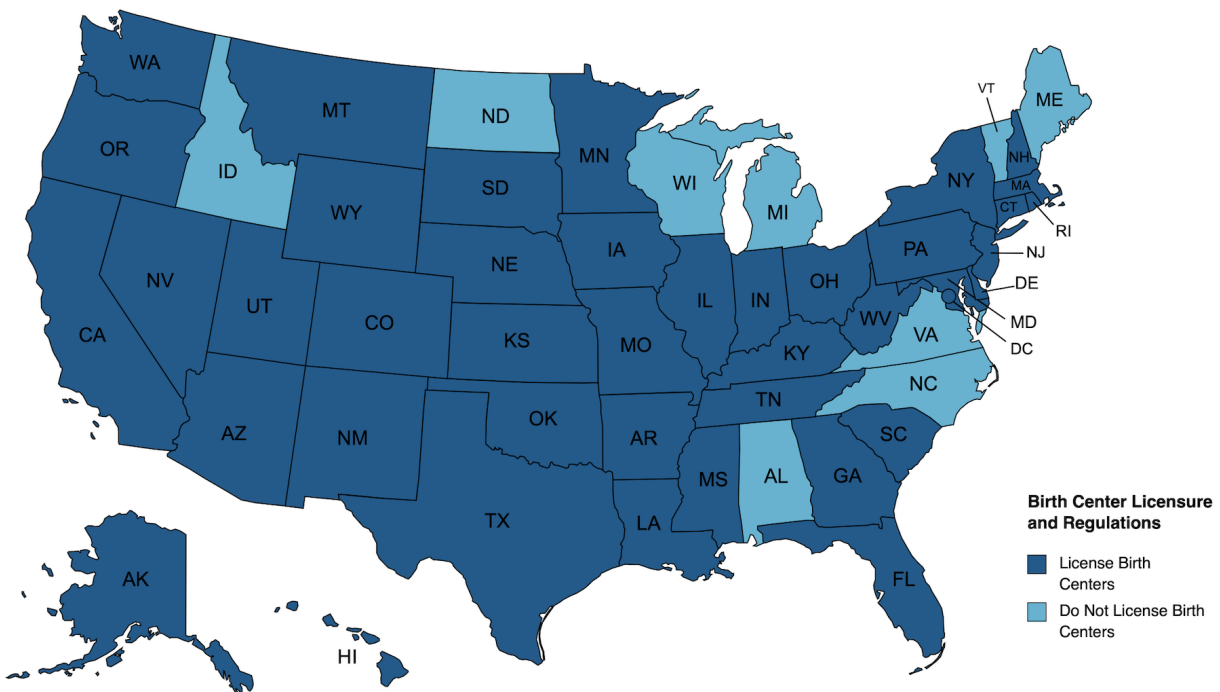




Birth Center Licensure & Regulation FAQs

In Michigan, 30% of counties are considered “maternal health deserts” and lack access to obstetric care. Midwives are part of the solution to this dire problem. The World Health Organization states that the number one way to combat maternal morbidity worldwide is with midwifery-led care. In countries that lead on maternal health, 80% of people are attended by midwives. Currently, less than 15% of families in Michigan have access to midwives. **Increasing access to birth centers increases access to midwives.** Michigan is one of only nine states that do not license birth centers.



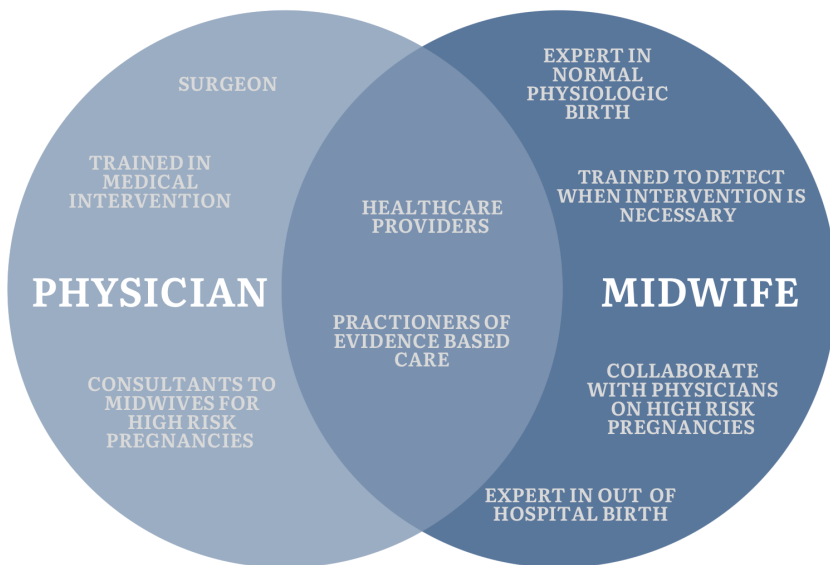
What is a birth center? A birth center is a home-like place where midwives provide prenatal, birth, and postpartum care. Birth centers are freestanding and not in hospitals. Community birth centers provide safe, culturally-reverent, midwifery-led healthcare for all.

Are birth centers safe? Research shows that 80% of people giving birth in the United States could safely give birth in a birth center. Birth centers are a safe choice for low risk pregnancy and an essential part of an integrated health system.

What is a midwife? Midwives are healthcare providers trained to provide safe, nurturing, hands-on care to birthing people before, during and after birth. Midwives approach pregnancy and birth as normal physiologic life events. They provide full spectrum prenatal, postpartum, and interconception care, and focus on building trusting relationships, meeting your educational needs and being a partner to you and your family during your pregnancy, birth and postpartum journey.

What types of midwives practice in Michigan? Two credentials of Midwives practice in Michigan: **Certified Professional Midwives** (CPMs) and **Certified Nurse-Midwives** (CNMs). Both credentials require completion of a national certification exam. CPM certification is based on competency and skill demonstration. CPMs can practice in homes, office settings, and birth centers. (In Michigan CPMs are Licensed Midwives). CNM certification requires at minimum a masters degree in nursing. CNMs can practice in hospitals, homes, office settings, and birth centers.

What is the difference between a midwife and a doula? Midwives are trained healthcare professionals; doulas are birth support persons. Midwives are healthcare providers who utilize evaluation, diagnosis, and management skills from their healthcare training. Doulas provide support, advocacy, and knowledge distinct from the evaluation, diagnosis, and management of a healthcare provider. Midwives and doulas both provide individualized support during pregnancy and labor, and are known for promoting non-intervention during normal labor and pregnancy.



What is the difference between a midwife and a physician?

Both midwives and physicians are primary care healthcare providers. Midwives are the experts in normal physiologic birth and reproductive healthcare. Physicians are experts in high risk complications, medical interventions, and surgery. Interventions and surgery aren't necessary in most pregnancies. Midwives are trained to evaluate when interventions are necessary and collaborate with physicians as needed.

References

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