

Joint Statement on Planned Home Births

This Joint Statement on Planned Home Births is issued by multiple Maryland-based health organizations in response to reports of adverse pregnancy outcomes resulting from planned home childbirths.

The Joint Statement on Planned Home Births is endorsed by the Maryland Board of Nursing (MBON), the Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO), the Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH).

Further, the Joint Statement on Planned Home Births is consistent with the national statement of the American College of Nurse-Midwives which notes, "The evidence indicates that appropriate client selection, attendance by a qualified provider, sound clinical judgment, and transfer to a receptive environment when necessary, promote safe outcomes."

Joint Statement

- I. During the course of prenatal care, a pregnant woman considering a home birth should consult with a licensed physician or licensed certified nurse midwife in order to be assessed as a candidate for a home birth.**

Factors critical to reduced risk of adverse outcomes associated with home births are:

- Individualized screening of all risk factors for home birth,
- Availability of a licensed and certified nurse-midwife or physician practicing within an integrated and regulated health system,
- Ready access to consultation, and
- Assurance of safe and timely transport to a nearby hospital if needed.

- II. To ensure the health and safety of the mother and infant, all planned home deliveries must be attended by a licensed physician or licensed certified nurse midwife.**

- III. It is unlawful for a physician or midwife to practice in Maryland without a valid Maryland license.**

Consumers can verify the Maryland licensure status of any physician at www.mbp.state.md.us/bpqapp and any nurse midwife at www.mbon.org/main.php under "Look Up a Licensee."