



# International Association of Professional Birth Photographers

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To: Hospital Administrator

From: International Association of Professional Birth Photographers

March 13, 2020

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the International Association of Professional Birth Photographers (IAPBP), a professional organization for birth workers who specialize in providing therapeutic photography support to women in labor and their families with a membership of more than 1,000, we thank you for the role you play in containing COVID-19 infection and for caring for those most affected by the virus in your community.

I am reaching out today in response to the additional infection control precautions placed in effect in hospital settings due to COVID-19. IAPBP is aware of discussions of restrictions on care team members in the delivery room while their clients are in labor and we fully support these additional precautions.

Birth workers specializing in professional birth photography are an important part of the delivery care team and we sincerely hope your hospital's policies do not exclude professional birth photographers from providing therapeutic photography support to their clients during this important time.

It is worth noting that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines on caring for a mother with COVID-19 recommend healthcare facilities follow, "infection control guidance on managing visitor access, including essential support persons for women in labor" (Interim Considerations for Infection Prevention and Control of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Inpatient Obstetric Healthcare Settings, February 2020). They go on to state, "If restriction of all visitors is implemented, facilities can consider exceptions based on end-of-life situations or when a visitor is essential for the patient's emotional well-being and care."

Additionally, The Phototherapy-Centre released the follow information with regard to photography and mental health:

*Therapeutic Photography techniques are photographic practices, where the intended goal is to produce positive change in individuals, couples, or families — the goal is to improve well-being, reduce social exclusion, and create positive change.*

Furthermore, research in Psychotherapy by Dr. Emanuela Saita and Martina Tramontano of Department of Psychology, Catholic University of Sacred Heart, states:

*The utilization of the photographic stimulus has been consistently associated with improvements of emotional, cognitive, and expressive abilities at the individual, group, or community level. Empirical evidence confirms how images can facilitate the communication of thoughts and emotions without the limitation of verbal language, which then contributes to overcome challenges or difficulties some individuals may experience (Uhrig et al., 2016)*

Understanding these are not normal times and that enhanced infection control procedures are needed in order to care for patients and communities, IAPBP has been working with our members to promote proper infection control protocols and the use of personal protective equipment. We are also providing resources to help members identify symptoms of viruses (in themselves and their clients) and strongly encourage them to follow the direction of their local, state or provincial public health officials.

We encourage you to visit the [IAPBP.com](http://IAPBP.com) website and review the professional birth photographer scope of practice. Professional birth photographers provide critical emotional and psychological support to clients and have been proven to impact positive outcomes. Additionally, while professional birth photographers are not clinicians, they can help fill a gap in providing emotional, informational, and physical support for families in these uncertain times.

To reiterate, birthing persons who have opted to bring birth workers specializing in professional birth photography into their birthing space believe our role is an important part of their delivery care team. For these patients, we are of the opinion that the service we provide is an essential element to an experience which will create lasting memories possibly resulting in the need for therapeutic photography practices. We sincerely hope your center's policies will allow professional birth photographers to provide this support to their clients during such an important time.

If you have any questions about the professional birth photographer scope of practice or this letter, please do not hesitate to reach out to me ([director@birthphotographers.com](mailto:director@birthphotographers.com)).

Respectfully,

Liz Cook

Director IAPBP

[www.birthphotographers.com](http://www.birthphotographers.com)



# International Association of Professional Birth Photographers

## Code of Ethics

The International Association of Professional Birth Photographers Code of Ethics is intended to encourage and preserve the integrity of the birth photography industry.

### **Professionalism**

- I will exhibit professional conduct at all times. This includes interactions with clients, peers, medical professionals, birth team members, support staff, administration and others. I will remember that in each interaction I am the face of the birth photography industry and I represent it as a whole.
- I commit to follow all hospital/birth center rules and regulations.

### **Honesty**

- I will be honest and kind to clients, peers and other birth professionals.

### **Accountability**

- It is an industry standard to ensure that I have back up gear when shooting birth photography.
- I Carry Appropriate Insurance For My Business.
- I am accountable to my clients. I abide by our contract in regard to being on call, image delivery and archiving.

### **Law:**

- I agree to abide by copyright laws. Copyright infringement is strictly prohibited. This includes both image theft and plagiarism.
- I have the appropriate business license in accordance with local laws and regulations.
- I pay tax in accordance with the local, state, regional and national laws.
- I utilize legal contracts with all clients to protect both my business and my client.
- I do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, disability or other factors.

### **Respectfulness**

- I will show respect for the birth space at all times. This includes respecting the birth choices a family makes, the birth team, care providers, location rules and family members involved.
- I agree that the job of the medical staff is a higher priority than getting a particular photograph.

### **Confidentiality**

- I provide my clients with confidentiality in accordance with our contract at all times. This is particularly important when sharing my presence at a birth as well as images, especially those of intimate nature, on social media. I always make sure I have permission before sharing.