Nurse-Midwives of America — NMOA

POLICY BRIEF
Community birth

Nurse-Midwives Are Experts in Community Birth

For 100 years, nurse-midwives have brought safe birth care to homes, birth centers, and rural communities.

THE MYTH

"Nurse-midwives only know hospital birth."

THE FACT

Every nurse-midwife is educated for home and birth center birth.

BIRTHS ATTENDED BY NURSE-MIDWIVES, CDC FINAL DATA, 2024

30% of midwife-attended U.S. home births	**49.4%** of U.S. birth center births, nearly half	**13,219** home births attended by nurse-midwives	**24,406** home and birth center births in a single year

EDUCATED FOR EVERY BIRTH SETTING

Nurse-midwives are nurses first, trained in community and population health. Every accredited midwifery program teaches birth outside the hospital, and the national scope of practice includes homes, birth centers, and hospitals. Not every nurse-midwife attends home births, but every one is educated for them.

Where it all began

1925
Frontier Nursing Service nurse-midwives ride horseback to home births in rural Kentucky.

1931
The nation's first school of nurse-midwifery opens in New York City.

1975
Nurse-midwives found the first state-licensed freestanding birth center in the U.S.

Strong outcomes, clear safety standards

In the National Birth Center Study II (79 centers, care mostly by nurse-midwives), the cesarean rate was **6.1%**, with **no maternal deaths**. Nurse-midwives bring careful screening, informed consent, and a written transfer plan.

OUR ASK

Let nurse-midwives serve families in every birth setting, with clear safety standards, informed consent, and a transfer plan.

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Sources: CDC/NCHS, Births: Final Data for 2024 (place of birth by attendant); AACN, The Essentials (population health); ACNM, Become a Midwife; ACNM, Definition of Midwifery and Scope of Practice; Frontier Nursing Service; Maternity Center Association records; Stapleton et al., J Midwifery Womens Health 2013 (National Birth Center Study II); American Association of Birth Centers.