

# MATERNITY CARE **CRISIS** IN ILLINOIS



*Solution* →

MIDWIVES THROUGH  
**LICENSURE**  
*is the best way to protect  
families & their newborns.*

Every year, hundreds of Illinois families choose to give birth at home for deeply held religious, philosophical or cultural beliefs. Because of these compelling reasons, these families are unlikely to choose hospital birth even if access to care is scarce. Many of these families, especially in rural areas where hospital L&D units are being shut down, cannot find appropriate prenatal care and deliver their babies at home **without a licensed home birth provider.**

Recent research reports a  
**↑ 77%**  
increase in home birth rated across  
the U.S. from 2009 - 2012

Black mothers in Illinois also are in crisis. Systemic racism leads to an almost **6 times higher rate** of maternal death than for white women. Black mothers are looking for alternatives to giving birth in the hospital system that so often fails them. Increasingly, they are seeking home birth as a remedy.

Currently, there are only **10 out of 102 Illinois counties** in which licensed home birth practices (doctors or nurse-midwives) are based. Families in the rest of the state are entirely without home birth care unless they engage the services of a unlicensed community midwife, but then, they have no assurance that their midwife has met any standards.



## **Black Market Maternity Care is NEVER SAFE!**

Setting standards and regulating community midwives through licensure is the best way to protect families and their newborns.



Because of the severe shortage of Illinois home birth midwives, some families are crossing the border so that they can deliver Illinois babies in Wisconsin or Missouri hotels. Others give birth unassisted by any midwife. The risk of mortality is significantly increased in unassisted birth. Even one Illinois mother giving birth this way because she feels she has no options, is one too many.

## *A Solution:* CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL MIDWIVES

**Recent research shows that states making it easier for midwives to care for pregnant women have better overall maternity outcomes.\* This was affirmed by a recent report from the National Academies of Science \*\* suggesting that maternity "care system integration can improve safety for women and infants during birth"**

Illinois Friends of Midwives and the Illinois Council of Certified Professional Midwives support the Certified Professional Midwife (CPM) credential as the basis for state licensure as a licensed midwife (LCPM). The CPM is the only credential that validates home birth knowledge, training and experience, and is now used as the basis for licensure in **35 states.**

Midwives who are licensed, have specialized training in home birth, and are nationally certified can help make home birth a safer option for Illinois families.

\*<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-childbirth-midwives/u-s-states-with-more-support-for-midwives-have-better-birth-outcomes-idUSKCN1GL2ZI>

\*\*<https://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=25636>



**HELP MAKE HOME BIRTH SAFER**  
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