



VIRGINIA PRISON BIRTH PROJECT

A research site of **Enhanced Perinatal Programs for People in Prison (E4P)**:
A multi-state project exploring pregnancy and postpartum support programs offered to incarcerated individuals

Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color are disproportionately represented in the criminal legal system. They are also at increased risk for adverse birth outcomes. E4P aims to reduce maternal health inequities in the criminal legal system by increasing our understanding of pregnant and postpartum people in prison and the programs that serve them.

Virginia Prison Birth Project's (VAPBP) mission is to nurture Well-Being, Connection and Hope by providing skilled support and compassionate presence for pregnant and postpartum people in prison. Our vision is to expand the reach of our support services to people in jail, on probation & parole and to engage with community and policy makers in innovative ways to help lift justice-involved families up across the Commonwealth. VAPBP provides doula supported perinatal services to individuals who are incarcerated at Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women (FCCW) in Troy, VA. VAPBP is an independent 501c(3) nonprofit organization. **Contact:** info@virginiaprisonbirthproject.org

VAPBP offers the following services:

- > Group prenatal programming
- > One-on-one prenatal programming
- > One-on-one support during labor and birth
- > One-on-one postpartum programming
- > Group postpartum programming
- > Lactation support

GROUP CLASSES

- Offered prenatally through 12-months postpartum - parenting during the birthing year
- Prenatal, postpartum and parenting education topics are tailored to participants attending class and to meet the needs of where they are gestationally or postpartum
- Yoga, self-care, and stress-management and worked into the parenting curriculum
- 2-6 attendees per session
- 45-60 minute classes, 1x week
- Facilitated by trained doula

PROGRAM INFORMATION

- VAPBP employs four doulas
- Programming began in 2018

ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORTS

- Offer at least 3 prenatal meetings
- Provide labor and birth support at the hospital
- Visits client every day in hospital
- Provide support at the time of separation from infant at hospital
- Offer at least 2 postpartum meetings

LACTATION

- Education about breastfeeding
- Participant can keep her breast pump with her
- Dedicated freezer for milk storage
- Milk can be picked up or delivered, depending on distance
- Dedicated space for lactating parents to breastfeed during visitation

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

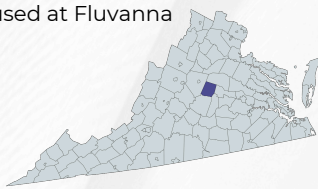
- Add two doulas to the program
- Expand group programming to include all new parents, which will be identified upon arrival at FCCW
- Implement parenting classes at a different facility for parents with kids aged 5 and under
- Expanding doula services to Henrico County Jail

NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Resumed attending births in July 2021, after a lapse in care starting in March 2020 due to COVID
- Started shipping milk weekly to caregivers in 2021
- VAPBP became established as a nonprofit in Fall 2021
- Partnering with another organization to provide baby care packages for the caregiver

FLUVANNA CORRECTIONAL CENTER FOR WOMEN (FCCW)

- Virginia has three women's state prisons. FCCW is the largest of the three.
- All people who are incarcerated and pregnant are housed at Fluvanna
- Located in Fluvanna County (shaded on map)
 - 55 miles northwest of Richmond
- Opened April 1998
- Capacity: 1200
- Maximum security facility



Learn more about VAPBP at:
<https://virginiaprisonbirthproject.org/>

