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**Checklist: Pre- and Post-natal Considerations**

This checklist aims to guide conversations between case managers and clients to help newcomer parents prepare for the pre- and post-natal (postpartum) periods of pregnancy in the U.S. Even if someone has experienced pregnancy in another country, understanding the expectations, resources, and cultural norms specific to the U.S. will assist their transition from pregnancy to parenthood.

**This checklist is not a medical document and is not intended to substitute for a conversation with a medical provider**. Below are some suggestions for how to use this checklist:

* The majority of included resources are **not client-facing**. Instead they are meant to familiarize service providers with the topic as they help newcomers navigate and prepare for the pregnancy experience in the U.S.
* Over the course of the client’s pregnancy, service providers can reference the checklist to help clients identify what information they already know and what they would like to discuss further with health care professionals during their medical appointments.
* Service providers may want to partner with other staff members or volunteers (i.e., local nursing or medical schools or hospitals) trained in delivering health education. However, only health care professionals should offer clients medical advice.

This checklist is not a compliance tool for any specific grant or program; always reference your grant agreement and terms for specific program requirements. The checklist should serve as a starting point framework rather than a comprehensive list. It is meant to be customized to include any additional checklist items as necessary.

This checklist was created in partnership with the Society of Refugee Healthcare Providers.

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| **Pre-natal care** | **Resources** | | **Discussed and needs follow-up? (Yes or No)** |
|  | | | |
| *How to know if you are pregnant:*   * *Do a home pregnancy test* * *See a medical provider* | [Mayo Clinic: Symptoms of Pregnancy: What Happens First](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/getting-pregnant/in-depth/symptoms-of-pregnancy/art-20043853)  [Cleveland Clinic: Pregnancy Tests](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diagnostics/9703-pregnancy-tests) |  | |
| *Locating an obstetrician (provider specializing in pregnancy and delivery)* | Call the client’s health insurance or check on the insurance company’s website to find an in-network provider; for uninsured clients, check with a local, [federally-qualified health center](https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/) for recommendationsfor recommendations |  | |
| *Scheduling a first obstetric appointment* | Defer to guidance from client’s health care providers |  | |
| *Enrolling in benefits and services for pregnancy; these may be federal, state, or local services such as:*   * *Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children* (*WIC)* * *Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP); people who did not qualify for Medicaid may now qualify due to their pregnancy* * *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)* * *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)* * *Healthy Start or other home visitation programs* * *[Insert local service here e.g., diaper bank, car seats, pregnancy support groups, doula services, other]* | [Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)](https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic)  [Healthcare.Gov: Getting Medicaid & CHIP](https://www.healthcare.gov/medicaid-chip/getting-medicaid-chip/)  [Healthy Start Programs](https://www.nationalhealthystart.org/find-services/)  [Home Visiting Program: State Fact Sheets](https://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs-impact/programs/home-visiting/state-fact-sheets) |  | |
| *Planning a cadence of medical appointments during the nine months of pregnancy; generally this cadence looks like:*   * *First and Second Trimester—an appointment every four (4) weeks* * *Third Trimester—an appointment every two (2) weeks and then, beginning at week 36, once every week*   *Planning how parent(s) will attend the appointments (e.g., is there public transit? do they need to be driven?) along with securing interpretation for the medical appointment, if needed*  *\*The frequency of appointments may change if clients have health concerns or if the health care provider determines they want to follow the pregnancy more closely* | [Mayo Clinic: First Trimester Prenatal Visits](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/prenatal-care/art-20044882)  [Mayo Clinic: Second Trimester Prenatal Visits](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/prenatal-care/art-20044581)  [Mayo Clinic: Third Trimester What to Expect](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/pregnancy/art-20046767) |  | |
| *Testing during pregnancy (e.g., ultrasounds, diabetes glucose tests, and genetic tests)* | [Mayo Clinic: Prenatal testing](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/prenatal-testing/art-20045177)  [Johns Hopkins Medicine: Common Tests During Pregnancy](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/common-tests-during-pregnancy) |  | |
| *Nutrition, pre-natal vitamins, and foods/substances to avoid during pregnancy* | [CDC: During Pregnancy](https://www.cdc.gov/pregnancy/during.html)  [Mayo Clinic: Pregnancy Diet](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/pregnancy-nutrition/art-20045082) |  | |
| *Vaccination during pregnancy (for the pregnant person, their partner, and other caregivers or family)* | [CDC: Pregnancy and Vaccination](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pregnancy/index.html) |  | |
| *Understanding fetus development month to month during pregnancy* | Mayo Clinic: Fetal Development—[First Trimester](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/prenatal-care/art-20045302), [Second Trimester](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/fetal-development/art-20046151), Third [Trimester](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/fetal-development/art-20045997) |  | |
| *Identifying urgent maternal warning signs during pregnancy* | [CDC: Urgent Maternal Warning Signs](https://www.cdc.gov/hearher/resources/download-share/guide-for-pregnant-women.html) |  | |
| *Ensuring that client knows how to reach their provider and/or 911 in case of urgent maternal warning signs* | Ask provider for number for urgent issues line |  | |
| *Creating a birth plan, which should include:*   * *Preferred pain management options, if desired* * *Who will be present during the birth* * *If an interpreter will be needed* * *Preferred gender of medical staff (and recognition that this may not be actionable depending on who’s available when a client gives birth)* * *Other cultural considerations or preferences medical team should be aware of*   *\*Care arrangements for other children at home should also be arranged; clients should also remember that birth plans may have to change depending on client’s and baby’s health* | Ask provider if they have a birth plan template or guidance; service providers can also find templates online |  | |
| *Touring the hospital and practicing how to get to the hospital* | Reach out to the hospital directly; each has different policies |  | |
| *Identifying when labor has started and when to go to the hospital* | Encourage discussion with client’s health care provider about who to call and when to come into the hospital |  | |
| *Setting expectations for labor and delivery, including:*   * *Advocating for an interpreter* * *Understanding vaginal delivery versus Cesarean delivery (C-section)* * *Navigating different medical interventions (e.g., induction)* * *Preparing for pain management options (e.g., epidural)*   *\*Clients should discuss these topics with their health care provider; service providers can help clients feel comfortable bringing these topics up with their provider if their provider has not covered them or if they have ongoing questions* | [Mayo Clinic: Stages of labor and birth](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/labor-and-delivery/in-depth/stages-of-labor/art-20046545#:~:text=During%20active%20labor%2C%20your%20cervix,increasing%20pressure%20in%20your%20back.)  [Mayo Clinic: C-section: What to expect](https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/c-section/about/pac-20393655) |  | |
| *Packing for the hospital* | [Pregnancy Checklist: Hospital And Home Preparation](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/pregnancy-checklist-hospital-and-home-preparation/) |  | |
| *Preparing to take baby home and ensuring clients have appropriate supplies* | [Pregnancy Checklist: Hospital And Home Preparation](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/pregnancy-checklist-hospital-and-home-preparation/) |  | |
| *Ensuring clients have a new car seat and are familiar with 1) how to install it safely in a vehicle; 2) how and when to use with baby; and 3) U.S. car seat laws*  *\*Many local police, fire departments or other agencies will provide a free training on how to safely install car seats and ensure baby is safely buckled into the seat.*  *Potential places for reduced cost or free car seats:*   * *Local places of worship, hospitals, police, fire and/or public health departments* * *Medicaid or WIC sometimes offer car seats as part of safety classes* * [*Safe Kids Coalition*](https://www.safekids.org/safe-kids-coalitions-united-states) * *Dial 2-1-1* | [What to Expect: How to buckle your newborn into a car seat](https://www.whattoexpect.com/first-year/safety-and-childproofing/how-to-buckle-newborn-in-car-seat)  [National Child Passenger Safety Certification: Get a Car Seat Checked](https://cert.safekids.org/get-car-seat-checked)  [NHTSA: Car Seats and Booster Seats](https://www.nhtsa.gov/vehicle-safety/car-seats-and-booster-seats#installation-help-inspection) |  | |
| *Baby- and child-proofing your home* | [Switchboard: In Home Health and Safety Checklist](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/in-home-health-and-safety-checklist/) |  | |
| *Discussing family planning/birth spacing and contraceptive care* | See postpartum care below for resources |  | |
| *Discussing pediatric care* ***prior*** *to baby being born, including:*   * *Identifying a pediatrician for the baby* * *Planning how pediatrician appointments will be attended post-birth. Pediatrician appointments are frequent in the first months and may happen within days of hospital discharge* | [Kaiser Permanente: Newborn Visit Day 2](https://mydoctor.kaiserpermanente.org/ncal/article/newborn-visit-day-2-1219928)  [American Academy of Pediatrics: 1st Week Checkup List](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/Your-Childs-Checkups/Pages/Your-Checkup-Checklist-Newborn-Visit-2-to-5-days-old.aspx)  [Baby Center: Your baby’s checkup schedule](https://www.babycenter.com/health/doctor-visits-and-vaccines/doctor-visits-for-your-babys-first-year_66) |  | |
| *Preparing for cultural customs or rituals during the pre/post-natal period (e.g. baptism/ceremonies, symbolic foods, etc.) and determining who will support the client in organizing these* |  |  | |
| **Post-natal (Postpartum) care** | **Resources** | | **Educational guidance provided? (Yes or No)** |
|  | | | |
| *Preparing for immediately after the delivery (vaginal or Cesarean)* | [Mayo](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/labor-and-delivery/in-depth/postpartum-care/art-20047233) Clinic: What to expect after a vaginal birth  [Mayo Clinic: C-section recovery: What to expect](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/labor-and-delivery/in-depth/c-section-recovery/art-20047310) | |  |
| *Retrieving baby’s important documentation, including: (can vary by hospital)*   * *birth certificate* * *Social Security number* * *certificate of benefits like health insurance* | Inquire with hospital staff (i.e., nurse or hospital social worker) | |  |
| *Planning postpartum doctor visit by mother three to six weeks after delivery* | [Postpartum Care (plannedparenthood.org)](https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/pregnancy/postpartum-care) | |  |
| *Anticipating mental health care for postpartum depression. Ensure clients are aware of warning signs of postpartum depression.*  *And make sure clients know how to talk with their healthcare provider if they are worried about their symptoms, and how to call the following for crises (interpretation available for both):*   * [988: Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](https://988lifeline.org/) * 911: For life-threatening emergencies | [American Academy of Pediatrics: Feeling Sad After Your Baby is Born?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4rR6tBXRLJI)  [MedlinePlus: Emotional Changes After Giving Birth](https://medlineplus.gov/languages/postpartumdepression.html)  [Mayo Clinic: Postpartum Depression](https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/postpartum-depression/symptoms-causes/syc-20376617)  [NRC-RIM: Mental Health Service Mapping PDF (nrcrim.org)](https://nrcrim.org/sites/nrcrim.umn.edu/files/2023-09/Mental%20Health%20Service%20Mapping%20PDF.pdf) | |  |
| *Breastfeeding, pumping, and where to go for support if needed, and legal rights around breastfeeding in public in the U.S.* | Ask medical provider for possible referrals to support  [La Leche League](https://llli.org/)  [Breastfeeding | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/InfantandToddlerNutrition/breastfeeding/index.html) | |  |
| *Bottle feeding* | [Feeding From a Bottle | Nutrition | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/InfantandToddlerNutrition/bottle-feeding/index.html) | |  |
| *Navigating sexual activity after delivery* | [Sex after pregnancy: Set your own timeline—Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/labor-and-delivery/in-depth/sex-after-pregnancy/art-20045669) | |  |
| *Identifying urgent maternal warning signs after giving birth* | [CDC: Urgent Maternal Warning Signs](https://www.cdc.gov/hearher/resources/download-share/guide-for-pregnant-women.html)  [MedlinePlus: Conversation Guide for Partners, Friends and Family](https://medlineplus.gov/languages/postpartumcare.html) | |  |
| *Family planning (birth spacing) and contraceptive methods (birth control)* | [Birth Control Methods & Options | Types of Birth Control (plannedparenthood.org)](https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/birth-control)  <https://nrcrim.org/afghans/health-education/sexual-and-reproductive-health-afghans> | |  |
| *Locating a family planning clinic* | [Clinic Locator | HHS Office of Population Affairs](https://opa-fpclinicdb.hhs.gov/search-results) | |  |
| *Preparing for women’s wellness exams: information for women and their partners* | <https://nrcrim.org/afghans/health-education/womens-wellness-0> | |  |
| **Considerations for working with pregnant unaccompanied refugee minors (URMs)** | **Needs follow-up?** | | |
| *Is the service provider—who is assisting the client with their pregnancy-related health needs—familiar with URMs? (For example, some organizations have health case managers who may assist but who are not as familiar with URMs)* |  | | |
| *Who will accompany the minor client to their pre-natal appointments? (For example, depending on the age of the pregnant URM, foster parents or program staff caring for a pregnant URM might have a legal obligation to be involved with medication administration, providing consent, etc.)* |  | | |
| *Is the baby’s biological father/parent available and will they be involved? What arrangements are needed to support their involvement (if/when appropriate and allowable)?* |  | | |
| *If the client is in school, what arrangements will be made for school attendance during pregnancy and after giving birth?* |  | | |
| *Does the client have a safe, age- and culturally-appropriate support network that can help them during and after their pregnancy? Does the client’s culture prescribe any traditional postpartum or child-rearing practices to incorporate into the birth plan?* |  | | |
| *Who does the client want to accompany them while they are giving birth?* |  | | |
| *Who will accompany the client and infant home from the hospital?* |  | | |
| *Who will support the client with the infant’s care and the client’s postpartum needs?* |  | | |
| *Who will support the client with their mental health needs? These should take into account the unique challenges of teen pregnancies.* |  | | |
| *Are additional measures necessary to ensure the safety of the client and infant? (Service providers will have to review their child placement guidelines to meet their state’s licensing laws.)* |  | | |
| *Are there additional social services for which the client and/or infant will now be eligible?* |  | | |
| *Does the client need assistance with child care arrangements?* |  | | |
| *Does the client need education or coaching on child care?* |  | | |

**Additional Resources**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website features [an entire section](https://www.cdc.gov/pregnancy/index.html) dedicated to pregnancy. [Hesperian Health Guides](https://hesperian.org/womens-health/), including their [healthwiki](https://en.hesperian.org/hhg/HealthWiki), are also useful resources to reference.

**Follow-up Notes**

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| *If any concerns or gaps were highlighted by client, please outline follow-up plan here:* |

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Signature of employee conducting discussion Date

(if applicable)

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Print name

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Signature of interpreter assisting discussion Date

(if applicable)

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*The IRC received competitive funding through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Grant #90RB0052 and Grant #90RB0053. The project is 100% financed by federal funds. The contents of this document are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.*