



## TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

KIRK COLE  
INTERIM COMMISSIONER

P.O. Box 149347  
Austin, Texas 78714-9347  
1-888-963-7111  
TTY: 1-800-735-2989  
[www.dshs.state.tx.us](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us)

June 23, 2015

Dear Texas Midwives,

We are excited to present new Waterbirth Guidelines to you.

As many of you may know, there was a very public case of a baby who died from legionella, possibly as a result of a waterbirth. This story was picked up by many news outlets and was run across the country. The Texas Midwifery Board decided to use this as an opportunity to create guidelines for Licensed Midwives who attend waterbirths.

In our research, we discovered that there are no clear guidelines currently written about how to conduct a safe waterbirth, how to clean the pools, nor what the clear risks and benefits of water birth are. We learned that some midwifery organizations were working on them, but there was nothing formal or published.

We worked with Licensed Midwives, Certified Nurse Midwives, Epidemiologists and Public Members to create these guidelines. In creating this document, Texas has become a national leader in the safety and use of water immersion during labor and delivery for Licensed Midwives.

This document contains guidelines. They are not part of our rules, therefore they are not enforceable. However, they serve as a model of a standard of care to strive towards. We encourage you to read through these guidelines and implement them into your practice.

You are welcome to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Laurie Fremgen, CPM, LM  
[lauriemidwife@yahoo.com](mailto:lauriemidwife@yahoo.com)