



Resolution No. 3011

2018 National Conference of Constituency Leaders — Sheraton Kansas City Hotel at Crown Center

1 Shackles on Women During Active Labor and Immediate Postpartum

2
3 Submitted by: Jewell Carr, MD, New Physician
4 Talia Aron, MD, Women
5 Sandra Hughes, MD, Women
6 Nichole Johnson, MD, LGBT
7

8 WHEREAS, Incarcerated individuals who are pregnant are frequently shackled throughout their
9 pregnancy, including during labor, delivery, and the immediate postpartum period, and
10

11 WHEREAS, the use of shackles during labor and immediate postpartum care interferes with the
12 ability of health care providers to safely care for the patient and fetus, which can lead to delays in
13 appropriate evaluation and subsequent administration of potentially life saving measures and
14

15 WHEREAS, in the United States approximately 64% of women in prison have been convicted of
16 non-violent crime, and
17

18 WHEREAS, no escape attempts have been reported among pregnant incarcerated women who
19 were not shackled, and
20

21 WHEREAS, ambulation during active labor and delivery improves pain management in labor and
22 increases the likelihood of having a vaginal delivery, and
23

24 WHEREAS, the ability for people to move or be moved during active labor and delivery is essential
25 to the proper management of many obstetrical emergencies as outlined in the American Academy
26 of Family Physicians, Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics curriculum, and
27

28 WHEREAS, skin-to-skin contact is the standard of care for healthy newborns in the newborn period
29 to optimize the infant's health during the neonatal transition, facilitate bonding, and decrease pain
30 during neonatal procedures, and
31

32 WHEREAS, pregnant and postpartum individuals are at increased risk of venous
33 thromboembolism, a major cause of maternal mortality in the United States, and
34

35 WHEREAS, limited mobility further increases risk of venous thromboembolism, and
36

37 WHEREAS, both the American Medical Association and American College of Obstetricians and
38 Gynecologists have policies opposing the shackling of immediate postpartum patients and
39 individuals in active labor, and
40

41 WHEREAS, the safety of medical staff is of utmost importance and must be ensured with adequate
42 correctional staff and use of restraints only in situations when there is risk of imminent harm, and
43

44 WHEREAS, federal courts have ruled that shackling during active labor violates the 8th
45 Amendment to the United States Constitution, now, therefore, be it
46
47 RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians oppose the shackling of
48 incarcerated people who are in active labor and during the postpartum period, considered to be six
49 to eight weeks after delivery, with proper safety protections for the healthcare team.