



SAI

Est. 1998

Welcome to Surrogate Alternatives, Inc.

Surrogate Alternatives
Inc.

"Building Tomorrow's Families Today"

International

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: As an Intended Parent, how do I begin the process?

A: You have taken the first step by contacting our agency and obtaining information via email, which includes a questionnaire you would complete and return to us. If after reviewing our information, you decide to move forward, you would complete the retainer agreement and email us 3-5 photos that we will include with your profile to share with Surrogates you are interested in. It is important to us, that we help you select a Surrogate we feel would be a suitable match for you and is in agreement with your beliefs regarding abortion, reduction, amount of contact during and after the pregnancy, etc.....

After you have submitted the questionnaire, retainer agreement, photos, medical release and have paid our agency fee, you will begin speaking with Surrogates until you have found someone you feel you can trust to carry your child. We are there every step of the way to ensure you and your Surrogate are comfortable with each other. We work with you both to find a date and time for the initial call that is in agreement with everyone's schedules. Once you and the Surrogate talk, we ask that you both notify us through email of your decision. Should you both decide it is a good match and choose to work together, you are then considered to be "officially" matched!

Q: How do you find Surrogate Mothers?

A: We find that many of the potential Surrogates that contact us, do so, after being referred by a woman who has been a Surrogate through our program or through another agency. We are also contacted through Internet sources that channel interested potential Surrogates our way, based upon our excellent reputation for providing quality care and support to our Surrogates.

Q: Once we sign with Surrogate Alternatives, how soon until we are "matched" with a Surrogate?

A: Our agency is one, of only a few agencies in California that **does not have a waiting list**. Matching with a Surrogate is quick, however, depending on your preferences, it may take longer. You would review profiles of potential Surrogates registered with us and choose a Surrogate that fits your criteria. We have over a decade of experience in determining which Surrogates we feel would match well with you, and will give you our suggestions, but ultimately, you would let us know which Surrogate you are interested in speaking with.

Q: We do not live in the United States, will you still help us?

A: Of course we will! We have successfully worked with clients in over 30 countries. Our agency fee is slightly higher, since you are a non-u.s. resident and the contact and involvement you will have with your Surrogate will be decreased, and the support she needs from our agency throughout the arrangement will be increased.

Q: What do Intended Parents look for in a Surrogate Mother?

A: Intended Parents desire a Surrogate to be mentally and physically healthy, no use of drugs, alcohol (while pregnant) or tobacco, a strong support system, with enjoyable and uncomplicated pregnancies and deliveries to help ensure a successful outcome.

Q: Once I decide to become a Surrogate will I have a choice in who I choose to work with?

A: Most definitely! Once you have been approved, we will add you to our database of available Surrogates. Our Surrogates are usually matched within 1-2 months. When an Intended Parent requests your profile you will be contacted and given their profile to review. If you are interested in possibly helping them, we will arrange a phone call between you and the Intended Parents so you can become acquainted. Then, if the Intended Parents are able, we will arrange for an in-person meeting. Our Surrogates ALWAYS have the final decision on who they choose to help.

Q: Being a Gestational Surrogate, how many embryos are usually placed in my uterus?

A: This would depend on many factors, such as, the quality of the embryos, the age of the donor or Intended Mother, the number of embryos available to transfer, etc. This decision is made by the doctor with input from both the Intended Parents and the Surrogate. The average number of embryos transferred are two or three.

Q: Do you feel pain during the embryo transfer?

A: Not usually, however, some Surrogates may have a tipped uterus or it may be difficult to position the catheter for the procedure. For the most part 95% of our Surrogates feel nothing during the procedure. It is usually painless and lasts a few minutes. Most clinics do require bedrest for the day of the transfer and 2 days afterward though.

Q: If I get pregnant with twins or triplets, do I receive additional compensation?

A: There is an additional strain on a woman's body carrying more than one baby during a pregnancy. So, in addition to your standard compensation, you will receive an \$7,000 (per child), in excess of one, as well as a higher maternity allowance.

Q: What about the medical screening, are all parties required to be tested?

A: Yes, they are. The basic testing is HIV, HTLV, RPR, drug and alcohol screening and a pap smear. The Surrogate also has to have a Hysteroscopy done. A Hysteroscopy is a test, which enables the doctor to observe the uterus, to ensure there is no scarring from a previous delivery, abortion or miscarriage and will check for tumors or fibroids. It is relatively painless and lasts only a few minutes.

Q: What type of support can I expect from Surrogate Alternatives throughout our arrangement?

A: Both parties will be assigned a case manager once they have been matched. This person will be in contact with you throughout the screening process. Our entire staff has access to your information and knows where you are in the process. This way any one of us can assist you should you call or email with questions. We also hold monthly support group meetings for our Surrogates, at our office, as well as provide them with a dedicated coordinator who will attend certain doctor appointments and contact them frequently during your arrangement. Our goal is to work closely with all parties so we can achieve a successful outcome for everyone.

Q: I am a Non-U.S. citizen, how do I obtain the birth certificate and passport for my child to return home?

A: A paternity judgement is filed with the court in the state of California when your Surrogate is 28 weeks pregnant. In California, you are named the legal parent on your child's birth certificate. Once you receive your child's birth certificate by mail, you will then be able to apply for a passport for your child. This process can take 4-6 weeks, depending on how back-logged the office is and how quickly they can process the document for you. Your attorney can assist you in providing the information for this finalization process to bring your child home.

Q: How many times do I have to come to California?

A: You are required to come for the medical screening and the egg retrieval/fertilization process if you are using your own eggs and/or sperm. You should expect to be here for at least 7 days. It is recommended, but not required that you try and be here at least once during the pregnancy and of course for the delivery of your child. We always recommend that if you are expecting twins, that you arrive 6 weeks before your Surrogate's due date and for a single child, 3 weeks prior. Be sure to stay in close contact with your Surrogate during the last trimester of the pregnancy to ensure you have ample time to make necessary travel arrangements. Once your child is born, you are the only person legally able to make decisions regarding your child's care, so it is imperative that you are here when your child is born, to take custody of your child.

Q: What if I do not speak English, can someone help me?

A: SAI currently has a Spanish translator on staff and our website is in the process of being translated into 8 different languages. If you speak a language other than English or Spanish, and require a translator for conference calls or meetings, we work with a local service that has the ability to assist our clients in over 15 different languages with 48 hour notice. (Additional fees will apply and be payable to the translation company directly).