

A pregnant woman with dark, curly hair and bangs is smiling warmly while holding a light-colored mug with both hands. She has a visible tattoo on her right shoulder and is wearing a maroon ribbed tank top, a necklace with a triangle pendant, and several rings. The background is a textured, greyish-brown wall.

SURROGACY

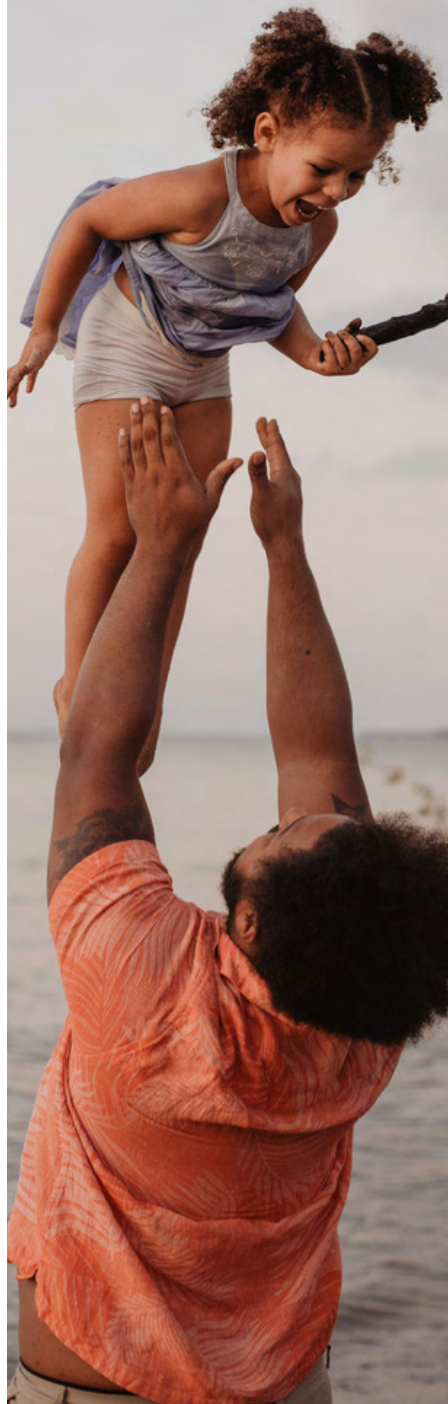
Everything you need to
know about becoming a
gestational carrier



ALCEA SURROGACY

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UNDERSTANDING SURROGACY

MAKING THE CHOICE TO PURSUE SURROGACY TAKES AN EXCEPTIONAL AND UNIQUE KIND OF PERSON.

Welcome to Surrogacy: How to Become a Gestational Carrier. There's so much to explore as you make the very important decision of becoming a surrogate and helping grow a family. Surrogacy is a multi-year commitment where you will be carrying a child for an individual or couple who have faced their own unique struggles in having a child. And we want you to be prepared.

Through these pages, you will learn everything you need to know to make an informed decision about becoming a surrogate as we answer your burning questions and more.

If you choose to become a surrogate, you can keep this as a guide to reference during your journey.

- What does it take to become a surrogate?
- Why do people become surrogates?
- What will I get paid?
- Will I be responsible for any costs as a surrogate?
- How do surrogates get matched with a family?
- What does the surrogacy journey look like?
- What happens after delivery?

ABOUT ALCEA

Before we tell you about the joys and challenges of surrogacy, you should know a little about us! Alcea Surrogacy is a full-service agency dedicated to a creative, inclusive, and ethical approach to family-building. Each member of the Alcea team has a personal connection to third-party reproduction - we are surrogates, donors, and parents. Supporting our clients is our number one priority, and it shows in everything we do.

No other agency supports surrogates like Alcea.

As an Alcea surrogate, you can count on us for personalized assistance and attention that is beyond compare. Our carriers receive fair compensation, holistic legal support, domestic cleaning services, curated monthly bump boxes, unparalleled support, and more.

Unparalleled attention. Exceptional care.

We educate and guide our surrogates through the details and unexpected elements of the process. Alcea will ensure you understand all of the risks and obligations involved before making a commitment. Our comprehensive screening process is built to ensure an optimal match for all parties involved. .

**Truly integrated support takes
a team of fertility-focused,
holistic practitioners:**

Midwives

OBs

Doulas

Surrogacy Support Groups

Experienced ART*Attorneys

Fertility Specialists

Clinic Personnel

Acupuncturists

in conjunction with

One-on-one social work support

Individualized case management



WHAT IS SURROGACY?

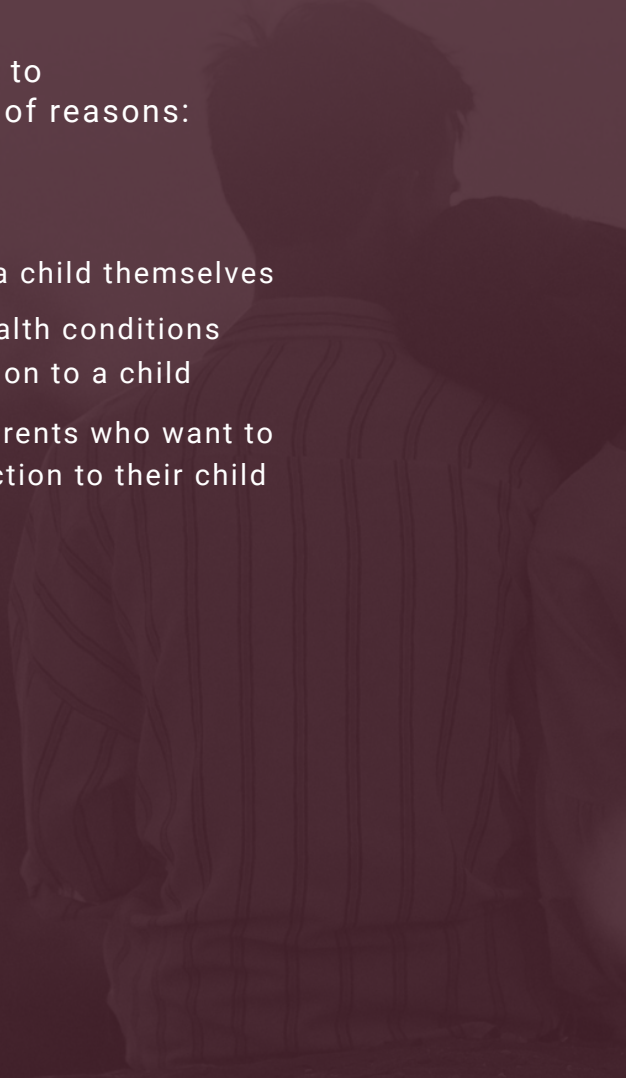
Making the choice to pursue surrogacy takes an exceptional and unique person, and helping families fulfill their dreams is a deeply personal life-changing experience. Surrogacy is a method of assisted reproduction in which a carrier agrees to bear a child (or children) for another individual or couple who will become the child's parents. This arrangement is supported by a legal contract, and the surrogate often receives compensation and other benefits in return for their services.

In traditional surrogacy, the surrogate is the DNA contributor of the child carried. With gestational surrogacy, the carrier does not use their own genetic material. Alcea Surrogacy only works with gestational surrogates in the United States.

Intended parents typically cannot have a child on their own and engage a surrogate to carry their child for them, sometimes using their own genetic material, or they may require an egg or sperm donor.

Intended parents come to surrogacy for a variety of reasons:

- Infertility struggles
- The inability to carry a child themselves
- Genetic defects or health conditions that could be passed on to a child
- Same-sex intended parents who want to have a genetic connection to their child





WHY SHOULD I WORK WITH A SURROGACY AGENCY?

Many carriers question if they should use an agency or attempt a surrogacy journey independently. Start with an understanding of what working with an agency brings to the table.

An agency will bring industry knowledge and experience to your surrogacy journey; anticipating what needs to be accomplished and spotting any potential concerns along the way.

You will have a supportive team, guiding you throughout the entire process. This consideration is a partnership with attentive management from beginning to end. Starting with a great matching process, that helps to align surrogates with like-minded intended parents.

Whether you choose to seek the assistance of an agency or go the independent route, all personal, medical, and mental health screenings will be necessary to become a surrogate.

Your agency has access to surrogacy professionals and networking within the community. They will be your advocate, facilitate all necessary pre-screening, and work as an intermediary with the clinic, prospective parents, and anyone else involved in the process.

Overall, an agency provides unmatched holistic support, saving everyone the time, energy, and worry of attempting to do it independently.



THE COMMITMENT

Becoming a surrogate is a decision that can be extremely fulfilling, but it is not without its own set of unique challenges.

Surrogacy requires you to commit to another family for a year or more as you undergo medical and psychological evaluations and procedures, endure all of the challenges related to pregnancy and labor, and carry a baby that isn't your own.

You forfeit elements of your privacy and will spend a lot of time explaining a surrogate pregnancy to strangers. But many people embrace these challenges and believe this path is lined with contentment, accomplishment, and connection, all of which positively outweigh any negatives of the experience.

Surrogacy is a unique opportunity to give an incredible and selfless gift to another person or couple, provides you with life-altering financial benefits, and can create lasting, meaningful relationships between you and the family you helped create.





WHO CAN
BECOME A
SURROGATE?

SURROGACY IN THE UNITED STATES

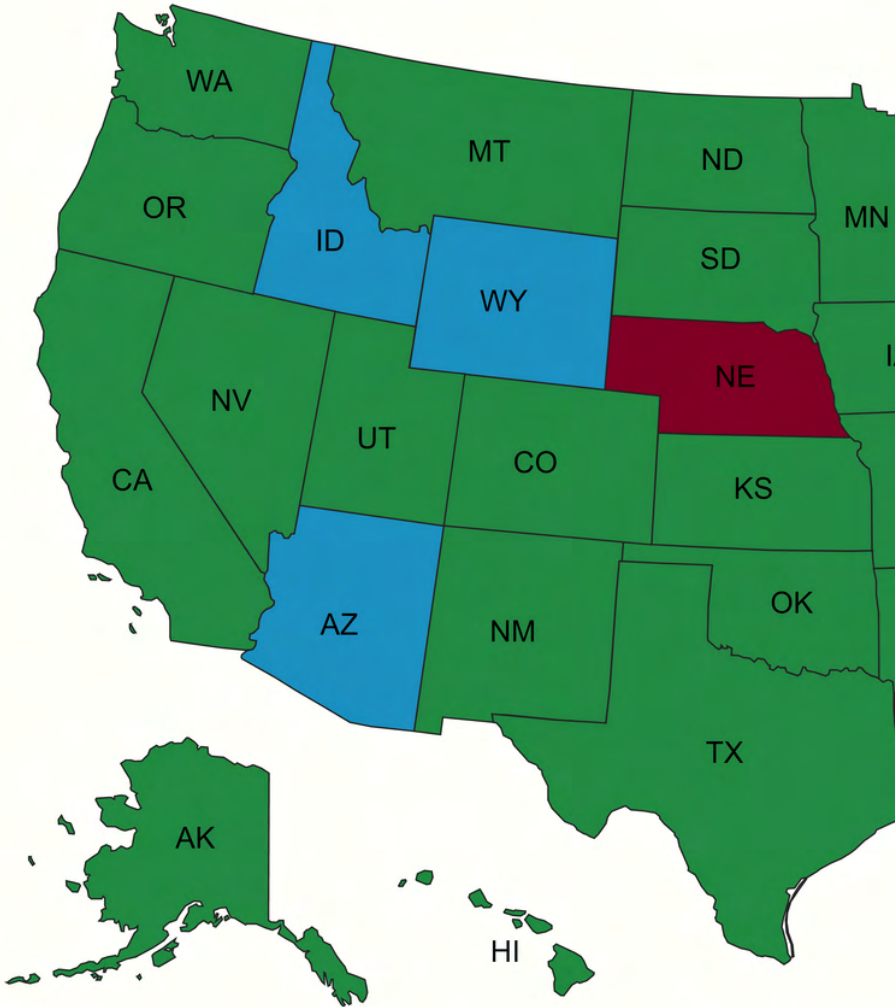
Although there are no federal surrogacy laws in the United States, agencies around the country follow similar protocols to ensure the health and emotional safety of both surrogates and intended parents.

Agencies specialize in the legal aspects of surrogacy contracts and can ensure that everyone involved is protected; from screening, through establishing parentage, and delivery.

Surrogacy is regulated on a state level. Processes and laws can vary wildly from state to state. Intended parents often have to travel to a different state to pursue a gestational surrogacy agreement that fits their unique needs.

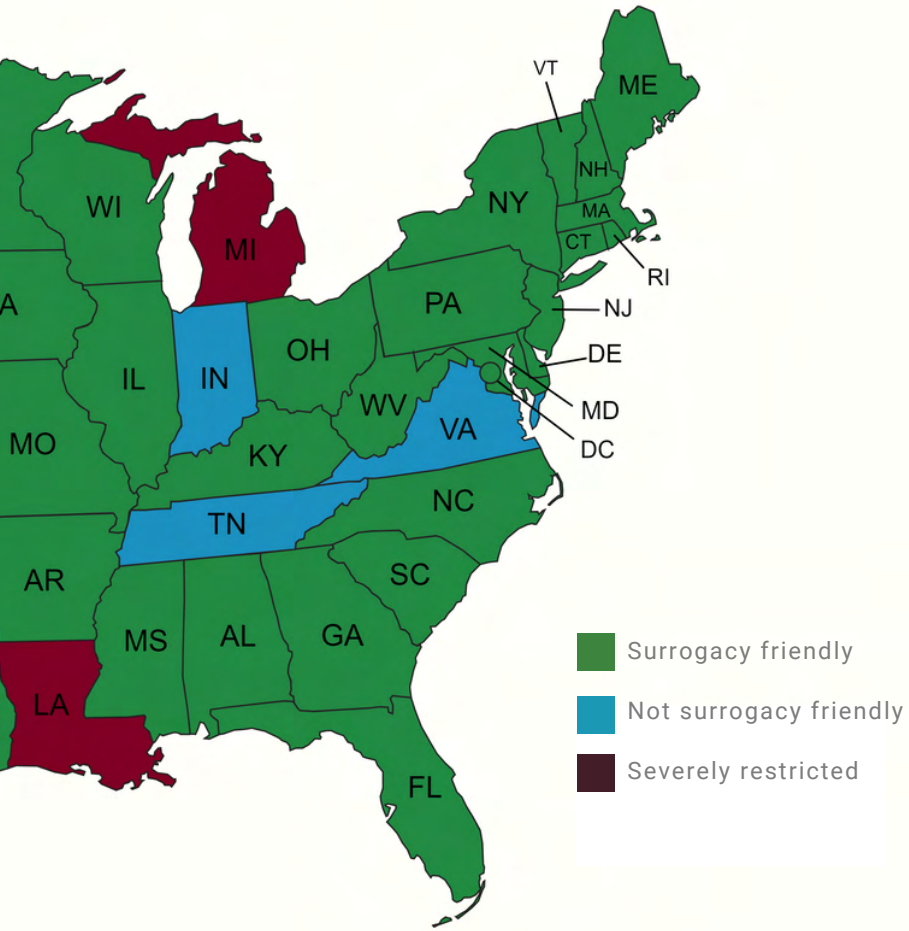
Michigan is the only state remaining that expressly prohibits paid surrogacy, but states are either more or less friendly to surrogacy with some having unclear surrogacy laws and uncertainty about the legality of pre-birth orders and contracts.

SURROGACY IN THE



States that are not surrogacy-friendly states that could present legal issues for people pursuing surrogacy are Arizona, Idaho, Indiana, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wyoming.

UNITED STATES



States where surrogacy is severely restricted and even criminalized, are Louisiana, Michigan, and Nebraska. It is highly recommended NOT to pursue surrogacy in these states.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BECOME A SURROGATE?

Between the ages of

21 → 42



Carried at least



1 child

to term without complications

Had no more than

4 deliveries

via cesarean section



BMI less than

34



Does not smoke cigarettes

abuse alcohol

or use illicit drugs

Has a stable home life with

emotional support

and child care



Does not have a

mental health condition



that requires the use of medication within
the past six months

THE REQUIREMENTS



While most agencies have similar requirements to become a surrogate, you will need to meet the specific qualifications of the IVF clinic you and your intended parents are working with.

Alcea prescreens candidates to ensure optimal clinic medical clearance is achieved. At Alcea, you must meet these minimal requirements.

Start the process and get pre-qualified
at alceasurrogacy.com/surrogate-requirements



SURROGATE COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

SURROGATES SHOULD BE FAIRLY AND THOROUGHLY COMPENSATED FOR THEIR TIME AND COMMITMENT

Every agency compensates surrogates differently, offering a wide variety of benefits, legal and medical coverage, and additional perks. Each state has its own legal particulars that can alter the rate as well.

While there are large variances in compensation, Alcea uses a hybrid inclusive compensation structure that is highly competitive. With average packages starting around \$40,000 and up, depending on location, experience, and insurance cost.

Alcea also has a “penniless process,” in which surrogates pay absolutely nothing out-of-pocket, including legal fees, meals, and travel expenses. Additional details about our benefits can be found on page 39 and on our website.

A pregnant woman with dark skin and her hair in a bun, wearing a brown and orange patterned headband, a white halter-neck top, and white pants, is sitting on a light-colored wooden floor. She is smiling and gently holding her pregnant belly. The background is a bright, out-of-focus window with white curtains. The text 'THE SURROGACY JOURNEY' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

THE SURROGACY JOURNEY

BRING JOY TO THEIR LIVES AND A CHILD TO THEIR ARMS

Surrogacy is a unique opportunity to give an incredible and selfless gift to another person or couple, provides you with significant financial benefits, and can create lasting, meaningful relationships between you and the family you help create.

“ You deserve unparalleled care and attention in the journey to help fulfill a family’s dream of having a child.

-Angela Richardson-Mook
Founder, Alcea Surrogacy

The path of a surrogate can be full of joy, purpose, and challenges, and your agency should be there beside you every step of the process. As a surrogate, you deserve extensive support and education so you always know what to expect and feel cared for and secure in your decision.

You will start with the pre-screening process to see if you qualify to become a surrogate. Requirements are rigorous to ensure the best chance at conception and a full-term pregnancy.

UNPARALLELED ATTENTION. EXCEPTIONAL CARE.

THE SURROGACY JOURNEY AT ALCEA

PRE-SCREENING

1-4 WEEKS

- Fill out application
- Profile creation
- Pre-screening consultation
- Medical records review
- Evaluation and background checks

MATCHING

3 - 6 WEEKS

- Profile exchange with intended parents
- Video call with intended parents
- It's a match!

MONITORING APPTS & EMBRYO TRANSFER

3-4 WEEKS

- Begin medications & injections
- Attend local monitoring appointments
- Embryo transfer! (3-7 day trip)

SCREENING

1-2 WEEKS

- Social worker evaluation & virtual home visit with primary support person/spouse
- Final matching preference consultation with Alcea staff

MEDICAL SCREENING & LEGAL CONTRACTS

1-2 MONTHS

- IVF clinic medical screening
- Finalizing legal contracts

PREGNANCY

9 MONTHS

- Pregnancy tests at a local clinic
- Ultrasound at 6-7 weeks
- Routine appointments
- Genetic testing & anatomy scan
- Work with attorneys to establish parentage
- Delivery day!

APPLICATION & SCREENING PROCESS

The application and screening process can last up to a month, as you and the agency personnel get to know one another and explore the qualifications to become a gestational carrier. Openness and honesty with the agency team ensure the best outcome for everyone involved.

You should feel 100% comfortable with the agency you choose. Make sure every question is answered to your satisfaction and that you have a full understanding of the commitment and challenges involved in a surrogacy journey.

What the process entails:

- Comprehensive online profile creation that covers your personal and medical history
- Virtual and phone consultations with agency staff
- Review of your medical records and insurance coverage
- Background check, mental health evaluation, and virtual home study for you and all adults living within your home

MATCHING

Viewing intended parent profiles, meeting them, and matching is one of the most exciting phases of the surrogacy process. Think of the road most intended parents have been on prior to making this decision - a long, emotional, and often costly journey. Surrogates have also put in a lot of time and effort to qualify as a gestational carrier, and this moment is an exciting milestone for everyone!

A great agency will consider as many factors as possible to ensure a compatible surrogate-intended parent match. Specific preferences should be considered; such as the number of embryos to transfer, views on termination, communication, and geographical location.

When a potential match is found, the agency will exchange profiles, and coordinate a virtual meeting. This will be the first face-to-face connection, and your agency should prepare you for what to expect and help guide the conversation.

During this meeting, you will have the opportunity to ask any outstanding questions, get to know the intended parents more, and discuss mutual expectations for your journey together.



CONTRACTS & THE LEGAL SIDE OF SURROGACY

For the uninitiated (that's most of us!), contracts and legal language can be overwhelming and read like an entirely different language.

Your surrogacy agency should be your partner and advocate for all negotiations and contract signings. You should have an attorney dedicated to your interests and someone who will explain, in clear language, the details of the agreement.

Always understand what you are signing before you pick up that pen!

GETTING PREGNANT

Your medical screening will be scheduled at an IVF clinic selected by your intended parents. If it is not local to you, you may need to travel and possibly stay overnight. During the screening, you can expect blood and urine testing, ultrasound and uterine evaluation, and sometimes a psychological evaluation.

Once you have legal clearance, the IVF medical protocol will be established and you will begin medications and monitoring appointments. These appointments will be at an IVF clinic local to you and will consist of bloodwork and ultrasounds to ensure your body is responding properly to the fertility medications for embryo transfer.

Your agency, along with your IVF clinic nurse coordinator, will work together to support you in understanding this protocol and how to properly administer it.

Q: What type of medications will I need to take?

A: Each clinic will have its own medical protocol unique to the carrier and their cycle. Medications may be prescribed as oral pills, injections, patches, or suppositories. Some of the medications commonly used in an IVF protocol are birth control, lupron, estrogen, progesterone, aspirin, prenatal vitamins, steroids, antibiotics, etc.

HOW DOES IVF WORK?

In order to establish a biological connection to their child, intended parents may elect to use IVF. Through this process, they can use their own eggs and/or sperm. Or they may also use an egg and/or sperm donor if desired. In IVF, the eggs are fertilized in an IVF facility outside of the surrogate's body.

After fertilization, the embryo (or embryos) is transferred to the surrogate. If the embryo transfer results in successful implantation, the carrier becomes pregnant and continues the medication protocol until released to an OBGYN, around the end of the first trimester.





EMBRYO TRANSFER

You will either travel to your intended parents' IVF clinic for the embryo transfer, or they will have their embryos shipped to your local monitoring clinic. Many intended parents attend the embryo transfer if they can, and it's a wonderful opportunity to spend time with them. If they are not able to be present, you can include them virtually via facetime, Skype, or text message as you can.

The embryo transfer is performed by the Reproductive Endocrinologist (RE) and is the final step in the IVF process. An embryo (or embryos) is placed into a catheter, which is then inserted into the vagina, through the cervix, and into the uterus.

Once the embryo has been placed safely in your womb, and you are released from the clinic, you will return to a comfortable hotel room to rest. We order you dinner in, and you and your support person settle in for an evening of relaxation.

PREGNANCY

After the embryo transfer, you'll return to your local monitoring clinic for blood tests called "beta hCG tests" which usually start 10 days after the embryo transfer.

Once positive beta tests are established, you'll undergo an ultrasound at your local monitoring clinic for around six to seven weeks for confirmation of heartbeat(s). This is a very exciting event because it means you are officially pregnant!

You can expect to be released to your personal OBGYN around week 10-12 of your pregnancy for routine appointments to check on the health of you and the fetus. From this point forward your pregnancy is handled like any other, with routine OB care.

Your agency should handle the pre-birth order and parentage process and ensure that you and your family are prepared for delivery and postpartum.



COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR INTENDED PARENTS

By the time you have a successful embryo transfer, you and your intended parents have had time to get to know one another, and expectations for the coming months have been agreed upon long before. Now is the time to share in the joy of growing and expecting a child.

Be diligent in communicating with your intended parents, helping them to feel a part of the pregnancy. You can do this by sharing photos, video chatting milestone moments, and simply deepening your relationship with the parents of the child you are carrying. You are an incredibly important part of each other's lives, and building a positive, supportive relationship gives everyone the best experience possible.

During this time, you will also discuss delivery expectations and hospital needs. Your agency should advocate for you and your intended parents with hospital staff to ensure they are familiar and comfortable with a surrogate delivery.

DELIVERY

Before you know it, the delivery day will be here. Every birth is distinct with its own surprises and challenges, and you should feel prepared and supported by your agency to ensure the most positive experience possible for labor and delivery. A good agency will partner with you and your intended parents to form birth plans that meet everyone's specific needs and help to communicate those to the facility you will be delivering in.

Each moment should be cherished, as you are a conduit in bringing someone else's dreams earthside. There are no words capable of describing how it feels to see your intended parents meet their child - you will experience a rush of joyous emotions mixed with bittersweet feelings of saying goodbye to your intended parents and their new baby.

“**Surrogacy is a gift that renders immeasurable joy in return.**

-CHRISTY LEONARDO
Surrogate

POSTPARTUM

Your journey doesn't stop just because you have delivered the baby; they don't call it the "4th trimester" for nothing! You are healing your body, experiencing a hormonal roller coaster, and settling back into life before surrogacy. This is a time to lean on your support system, take some time to yourself, and relax.

As you navigate postpartum, your agency should assist in ensuring any lingering medical bills are paid, you have access to any needed mental health resources, and that you can reflect on your surrogacy experience as supported, empowered, and ultimately be satisfied with your decision.

Many surrogates agree to pump breast milk and send it to the intended parents so they can nourish their child. This agreement is written into the surrogacy contract so that your time and expenses are accounted for. The choice to express milk and for what length of time, is a collaboration between you and your intended parents.

STAYING IN TOUCH WITH YOUR INTENDED PARENTS

Every surrogacy journey is unique, and the relationship a carrier has with their intended parents is personal. Some surrogates feel content with occasional contact and updates, while some remain in touch with the Intended Parents and child for years to come, sharing photos and milestones of life. These connections can be fostered and grown organically throughout your surrogacy journey and beyond.



Angela Richardson-Mook, Alcea Surrogacy founder with her three children and two she carried as a surrogate.



CHOOSING AN AGENCY



WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR AGENCY

Fair, prefunded compensation and the freedom to spend it as you need

Legal services with an attorney devoted to protecting your interests

All medical costs from screening through postpartum

Monthly health insurance premium coverage, if applicable

Protection, support and an advocate during the entire process

THE ALCEA DIFFERENCE

Female-owned and operated, Alcea is an agency built on experience and heart. Our team consists of inclusive experts who are passionate about what they do. Our model prioritizes BIPOC and queer representation in regards to our clients, affiliates, surrogates, donors, staff, and, most importantly, in our actions.

Working with ethical and respected third-party reproductive experts, coupled with facilitating and supporting perfect pairings, guarantees the comfort and security of both our parents and surrogates. Our team is committed to in-depth compatibility assessments, and we only match surrogates who have already passed a rigorous qualification evaluation.

This is one of the most significant decisions of your lifetime, and our team has been there. We keep the process simple and technologically savvy, and our team handles every detail, allowing for the emotional capacity to meet the challenges of third-party reproduction family building. You have a partner in Alcea, and that partner is decidedly different.

COMPENSATION RATES AT ALCEA

\$40,000 - \$65,000

Compensation package for first time carriers

\$5,000 - \$10,000

Additional compensation for experienced surrogates

Additional Benefits

Dedicated advocacy team

Postpartum assistance

Comprehensive medical & legal support

Holistic & supportive screening process

3rd-trimester domestic housecleaning

Acupuncture

Maternity clothes

Pre-paid travel expenses

Monthly curated bump boxes



ALCEA SURROGACY

www.alceasurrogacy.com