

Gestational Carrier Considerations

- 1) **Understand if gestational surrogacy is right for you and your loved ones**
 - a) Seek experienced advice during the decision-making process whether it be from a professional, a former gestational carrier or intended parent
 - b) Many resources exist, including The Surrogacy Experience (TSE), to help you understand all the facets of the process

- 2) **Things to consider when looking for the right surrogacy agency to work with:**
 - a) Choose a qualified agency that fits your personal requirements and expectations
 - b) Understand their carrier pre-screening process
 - c) Consider the level of support provided throughout the process and post-delivery
 - d) Understand how the agency will manage the insurance process, e.g., review of existing policy, facilitating the purchase of supplemental coverage as needed, claim submission both during and after the pregnancy and assisting with the rollover of insurance coverage, post-delivery, to the intended parents
 - e) How they manage the financial obligations, including establishment of escrow accounts and expense reimbursement
 - f) How they handle administrative details, e.g., travel arrangements, coordination of legal and medical appointments, etc.
 - g) What support do they offer you throughout the entire journey and post-delivery

- 3) **If you choose to work with TSE, once your application has been approved, you will begin the pre-screening process prior to being invited into our surrogacy program. Screening includes:**
 - a) Medical record review by a medical professional in third party reproduction
 - b) Sign off from PCP/OBGYN stating you are cleared and healthy to become pregnant
 - c) National background check for you and for any adult living in your household
 - d) Initial psychological evaluation by a licensed mental health professional
 - e) Drug screening
 - f) Home Visit by a member of TSE or by a licensed social worker

- 4) **Begin the matching process with prospective intended parents: *(every agency's process will differ)***
 - a) TSE will work closely with you to outline your expectations (e.g., intended parent relationship, carrying multiples, birth experience, etc.)
 - b) Create a gestational carrier profile to share with intended parents
 - c) When an intended parent expresses interest in your profile, you will receive their profile for review
 - d) If mutual interest exists, our agency will facilitate an introductory phone call with the intended parents and serve as the facilitator of the call
 - e) Once both parties agree to move forward, you will sign a Match Agreement and commence the medical process with an IVF clinic of the intended parent's choice

5) Finalizing a surrogacy agreement

- a) The intended parent's legal counsel will draft an agreement governing the relationship and financial obligations between you and the intended parents and based off the questionnaire you will have filled out listing expectations
- b) It is recommended separate legal counsel be retained to review your contract with the intended parents and to ensure your health and interests are protected. Your legal fees are paid for by the intended parents

6) Medical Process

- a) At the same time, your legal agreement is being drafted, you will work with the IVF clinic to complete additional screening steps including an in-depth psychological evaluation and medical testing, based on their requirements
- b) Once the IVF clinic approves you to move forward, and the surrogacy agreement is signed with the intended parents, the medical process commences
- c) The circumstances of you and your intended parents will dictate what medical procedures are required for surrogacy - however, all cases will involve In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)

7) The Pregnancy & Birth Plan

- a) Once pregnancy is confirmed via an ultrasound showing heartbeat(s) you will be released from the fertility clinic's care and can see your OB/GYN for the remainder of the pregnancy
- b) Depending on the intended parent's desired level of involvement, TSE will coordinate with you and your intended what appointments they will be attending. Typically, the intended parents will attend the first OB appointment, 20-week milestone and the birth
- c) TSE will work with both parties to develop a detailed birth plan and facilitate a meeting with hospital staff to manage the events at the hospital (e.g., what role the intended parents will have while in the hospital, who will be present during the birth, etc.)

8) Pre-birth order is filed

- a) The specific circumstances and location of you and your intended parents will dictate what legal counsel and proceedings are required
- b) If pregnancy is achieved, the legal counsel for the intended parents will petition for the pre-birth order allowing the intended parents to be listed on the birth certificate as the legal parents of the child; depending on the state and circumstances step parent adoption may be necessary
- c) You and your spouse (if applicable) will be required to cooperatively participate in the legal proceedings that will lead to issuance of a pre-birth order (An agreement by you to cooperate in this process will be part of your gestational surrogacy contract)

9) Post-Birth Support

- a) TSE is committed to providing you with post-birth support including regular checkpoints and assistance with any lingering administrative details

**The information provided above is meant as a guideline for your reference only; your circumstances will determine what steps are required during the surrogacy process*