



# Intended Parent Guide to Surrogacy

2026



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## Dear Intended Parents,

In 2015, Cassie Wright, a parent through IVF, and I started Roots Surrogacy in the Bay Area because we saw a need for something more personal within a mid-sized agency model. We set out to build the kind of agency we would want to work with ourselves — whether as a surrogate or as a parent.

A decade later, with more than 500 families created, our team continues to offer expert guidance grounded in transparency and compassion. I'm incredibly proud of the community we've built — one where surrogates feel genuinely supported and appreciated, and intended parents feel confident, cared for, and never alone in the process.

When you're ready to grow your family, we're here to support you every step of the way. Our approach is deeply personalized because I believe both surrogates and intended parents deserve to feel valued, respected, and empowered throughout the entire process.

Every journey is unique, and it's an honor to serve as your partner, guide, and advocate. At Roots Surrogacy, this is the story of your family, and I'm grateful we get to play a small but meaningful part in it.

Best,



*Brooke*

**Brooke Kimbrough**  
President & CEO

# The Surrogacy Process





## Agency Selection and Onboarding

Choosing an agency is one of the hardest decisions in surrogacy because they are the project managers that you are hiring, but you don't know a whole lot about the project! Good agencies are guides, partners, and friends who will be able to assist in any aspects of your journey. Onboarding with Roots starts with an introductory Zoom call with our co-founder, Brooke Kimbrough, who walks you through the process, introduces the team, and answers all of your questions.

## Waitlisted

This is one of the most challenging parts in all of surrogacy... the hurry up and wait! There is a surrogate shortage in the United States. All good agencies have waitlists for parents, as there are just not enough surrogates to support all of the Intended Parents seeking to grow their family through surrogacy. Wait times can be anywhere from a couple of weeks to 18 months, depending on the agency. At Roots, we offer several packages that can expedite wait times for our parents and put them on a shorter path to parenthood.

→ **Plans and Pricing**



## Surrogate Vetting

Gestational Carriers are scrupulously vetted for four months with Roots Surrogacy before they are ever introduced to an Intended Parent. It is an arduous process that we take pride in as our surrogates come out educated about the process and committed to the journey and timeline. We follow all social media, do investigative background checks, run her driving record, a full review of medical records, pregnancy and delivery history, run lab work, and do psychological interviews and testing. We only end up partnering with one percent of the surrogates who apply with us. In maintaining this level of care and scrutiny, we are confident in the surrogate candidates that we put forward and their ability to connect and commit to your family and the surrogacy process.

## Matching

Once you have reached one of the top slots on our waitlist, we begin considering a multitude of factors that allow us to connect you with a surrogate that fits your wants and needs. Once that surrogate is fully vetted, her profile is shared with you. You only see one profile at a time and are asked to carefully consider her as a viable choice. There is no database of surrogates. If you choose to pass, you remain at the top of the list, but the surrogate will be matched with the next Intended Parent. If you do choose to accept and take the next steps with her, your profile is shared with her. If all parties agree, the medical records, background checks, and psychological evaluation of the surrogate are shared with your clinic for approval. Once approved, we will do a match call to introduce you, set expectations, talk about the timeline and particulars.



## Surrogate Prep and IVF

In order to have your surrogate prepared and qualified for IVF, several steps need to take place. We need to get the surrogate physically evaluated at your IVF clinic in a process known as a medical screening. They will do a transvaginal ultrasound and a series of labs. Once cleared, we will begin the legal contract phase. Your attorney (we can refer you to one) will draft your Gestational Carrier Agreement, which is the legal relationship between you and the surrogate. You will go over it with your attorney, and then it will be sent to the carrier's attorney. She will review it with the surrogate, and everyone will sign and notarize. Once legal contracts are in place, you will fund escrow. This is a holding account that the remainder of all payments will come from (surrogate payments, hospital, OB care, insurance, etc.) Lastly, your surrogate will start on a course of medications that will prepare her body for transfer. The transfer will occur at your clinic, and we will test for success ten days post-transfer.

## Pregnancy

If the transfer is successful, the IVF physician will be in charge of the surrogate's care for the first trimester because she will remain on medications until then. Once we reach about 12 weeks, the surrogate will transfer care to her OB and will be seen like a natural pregnancy for the remaining two trimesters. The surrogate will give birth in a hospital near her. You will be expected to be at the birth and will usually be allowed in the delivery room. It is a magical day, and everyone is thrilled that the baby has arrived. You will go home with the baby after you are released from the hospital, usually 24-48 hours after birth if there are no complications. Depending on where the baby is born, we will help with the planning of your return home with the baby.



## Parentage Order

Parentage Orders grant you parentage to your child. We only work with states that provide these prior to the baby being born in a process known as a Pre-Birth Order. We will work with an attorney in the state where your baby will be born in order to acquire this judgment and will provide it to the necessary people to make sure that you are the parent(s) listed on the birth certificate.

## Birth and Beyond

Depending on the needs of your family post-birth, we can help facilitate travel arrangements, passports or other documentation needed in order to get you back home. We maintain long-term connections with all of our clients and love to see updates on baby and family milestones. A large number of our clients return for additional sibling journeys, and we are happy to oblige!

# Picking Your Egg Donor

Choosing an egg donor is a deeply personal and significant step in the surrogacy or fertility journey. While the decision-making process can feel overwhelming, understanding what factors are truly important and which considerations may not be as relevant can help you make an informed choice. Let's walk through what you might want to think about when selecting an egg donor.

We're happy to make referrals and recommendations.





## Key Considerations When Choosing an Egg Donor

A donor's health and medical history are often at the top of the list. Their physical and genetic health can influence the overall health of the child, so it's important to review their medical screenings and family health history to ensure there are no hereditary conditions or concerns.

Age is another factor that can play a role. Younger donors, typically between 21 and 30, tend to have better egg quality and quantity. This age range is often recommended by medical professionals.

Physical characteristics can also be a consideration for some families. You might want to look for a donor whose traits—such as height, eye color, or hair color—resemble your own or align with your preferences. While this is more of a personal choice, it's worth thinking about.

Educational background and talents are aspects that some intended parents value. While these don't determine a child's future abilities, they can resonate with your family's values if you're looking for specific achievements or skills.

If the donor has a history of successful donations or pregnancies, that can be reassuring. Proven fertility often increases the likelihood of a successful cycle, so it's worth considering donors with prior experience or personal pregnancies.

Availability and willingness are practical but essential factors. A donor needs to fully understand and commit to the medical, legal, and emotional aspects of the process. Choosing someone ready and willing to go through this journey is crucial.



## Other Factors to Keep in Mind

Genetic testing is an important step. A comprehensive screening can identify any genetic conditions that may pose risks, ensuring compatibility with your or your partner's genetics.

Decide whether you prefer an anonymous donor or someone open to future contact. All of the research and data points to connecting with a known donor, as your child will want access to their health history and may want to have some sort of relationship in the future with the donor and/or their biological siblings.

For some, cultural and ethnic background matters. If maintaining heritage is a priority, you may want to seek a donor who shares your cultural or ethnic background.

Personality and values might also influence your choice. Many parents like to read donor profiles to find traits or interests that align with their own family.

Finally, work with a reputable agency or clinic. Choosing a reliable provider ensures that donors are properly screened and ethical practices are followed throughout the process.

## Things That Might Not Be As Important

It's easy to get caught up in superficial traits, but traits like extreme beauty or extraordinary talents aren't necessarily significant in the bigger picture. Focus on what truly matters to you.

Try not to compare donors excessively. While it's natural to weigh your options, fixating on every detail can make the process more stressful. Trust your instincts and prioritize what feels right.

Immediate availability may be tempting, but choosing a donor solely because they're available quickly might not be the best long-term decision. It's worth waiting for the right match.

Lastly, perfection isn't the goal. Every donor has their own strengths, and your child will grow into their own unique person.



# Picking Your Surrogate

Choosing a surrogate may not be as difficult as you think. Health and lifestyle, relationship expectations, communication, and connection are the main criteria you should be considering. Luckily, Roots Surrogacy matches 150 parents and surrogates a year and can help you choose the best partnership for you.



## Things to Consider When Choosing Your Surrogate

Choosing a surrogate is a deeply personal and significant decision. At Roots Surrogacy, we encourage intended parents to approach this process with clarity and an open mind. One way to organize your thoughts is by using a simple yet effective method: take a piece of paper and fold it in half. Label the left side as Column A (Non-Negotiables) and the right side as Column B (Nice-to-Haves).

### Non-Negotiables

**Health:** She meets the medical criteria for a healthy pregnancy.

**Pregnancy History:** A successful history of full-term, uncomplicated pregnancies.

**Healthy Lifestyle:** No smoking, drug use, or other health risks.

**No Criminal History:** A clean background check.

**Support System:** A strong support system, including family and friends who support her journey.

*These factors are critical. Working with a reputable agency like Roots Surrogacy ensures that all these elements are carefully screened before a match is even considered.*

### Nice-to-Haves

**Political Affiliation:** While some may prefer a surrogate with similar beliefs, this does not determine a successful match.

**Geographic Location:** Some prefer a surrogate nearby, while others are open to a wider geographic range.

**Marital status:** Some prefer surrogates who are married, while others do not consider this a key factor.

**Relationship:** Do you want a close bond with your surrogate, or are you more comfortable with a professional relationship.

*Flexibility can help facilitate a smoother matching process. No surrogate will check every box, and the most successful journeys come from mutual respect and understanding.*



## A True Partnership

Surrogacy is a two-way relationship. As much as you are selecting a surrogate, she is also selecting you. These are kind, generous women who are willing to help you start or grow your family. Keeping an open mind and focusing on the fundamental qualities that matter most will help ensure a positive experience for everyone involved.

By thoughtfully considering both your non-negotiables and preferences, you can enter this process with confidence, knowing you are making the best choice for your family's journey.

For more information or guidance on finding the right surrogate for you, our team at Roots Surrogacy is here to help every step of the way.

# Personalized Surrogate Matching

At Roots, we understand that choosing a surrogate is one of the most important steps in your surrogacy journey. This partnership is built on trust, mutual respect, and shared goals, and we are here to make the process as seamless and stress-free as possible. With our rigorous vetting process and dedication to your unique needs, we ensure that every surrogate we recommend meets the highest standards for a successful match. Here's how we do it.





## Our Comprehensive Vetting Process

Before matching a surrogate with an intended parent, we conduct an in-depth evaluation to ensure that she is fully prepared for the journey. Our process includes the following steps:

**1. Education and Preparation:** We start by educating potential surrogates about the surrogacy process, including what to expect, timelines, medications, and IVF procedures. This ensures that every surrogate understands the journey ahead and is fully prepared to commit.

**2. Complete Medical History and Record Review:** Our team conducts a thorough review of the surrogate's medical history and records. This step verifies her physical readiness to carry a pregnancy, ensuring a history of uncomplicated pregnancies and no significant medical risks.

**3. Lab Work and Health Screening:** Surrogates undergo comprehensive labwork to check for active infections, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and a toxicology screen. This ensures that she is in optimal health for pregnancy.

**4. Background Investigation:** We perform a detailed background check using a private investigator. This investigation extends to anyone in the surrogate's household over the age of 18, ensuring a safe and stable home environment.

**5. Social Media Audit:** Throughout the surrogacy process, we monitor the surrogate's social media activity, including platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok. This helps us maintain transparency and ensure alignment with the expectations of intended parents.

**6. Psychological Evaluation:** Every surrogate undergoes a two-part psychological evaluation. This includes an in-depth interview with a licensed mental health professional and psychological testing. These steps assess her emotional readiness, stability, and motivation for becoming a surrogate.



## Matching with Intended Parents

Once a surrogate has passed all the initial screenings, we focus on creating a personalized match. This process is based on:

- **Personalities:** Ensuring compatibility between the surrogate and intended parents.
- **Clinical Fit:** Aligning medical and logistical needs.
- **Expectations:** Considering the goals and expectations of both parties regarding communication, involvement, and the journey.
- **Lifestyle Compatibility:** Evaluating factors such as schedules and personal habits.
- **Religious and Political Associations:** Addressing these aspects as necessary to ensure alignment in values and beliefs.

At Roots, we prioritize matches that foster strong, trusting relationships, setting the foundation for a positive and fulfilling surrogacy experience.

## What Sets Roots Apart?

In addition to a decade of experience, our meticulous process ensures that every surrogate is:

- **Fully educated about the surrogacy journey.**
- **Medically and emotionally prepared to carry a pregnancy.**
- **Legally and logistically aligned with your needs.**
- **Compatible with your values and expectations.**

By addressing every detail up front, we eliminate uncertainty and provide peace of mind, giving you the confidence to move forward with your journey.



# The Cost

Estimated Total Cost of Surrogacy in 2026



## Choosing the Right Plan

We are a full-service agency, which means we handle the entire journey from the initial Zoom call through the birth of your baby and beyond. We understand that every family’s needs are unique. Whether you’re seeking a steady, supportive experience or a fast-tracked journey, our plans are crafted to ensure your comfort, confidence, and success at every step.

### Estimated Total Journey Cost: Agency Plan Fee + \$150,000

*This estimate applies only to the Harmony, Premium Connection, and Executive Bliss plans—it does not apply to the Total Assurance Plan.*

For a singleton journey completed within 12 months, without egg donation, the average total cost is approximately \$150,000 + the agency fee plan fee. This includes surrogate compensation, legal, medical, insurance, and related expenses. Additional costs may apply for donor services, international travel, or specific medical needs.

## Plan Fee Options

### Harmony Plan: \$50K

Estimated Match Time: ~12 Months

**Estimated Total Cost (including clinic): \$200K**

### Premium Connection Plan: \$72K

Estimated Match Time: 3-6 Months

**Estimated Total Cost (including clinic): \$225K**

### Executive Bliss Plan: \$150K

Estimated Match Time: 3-4 Months

**Estimated Total Cost (including clinic): \$300K**

### Total Assurance Plan: \$400K

Estimated Match Time: 2-4 Months

**Estimated Total Cost (including clinic): \$400K**

The Total Assurance Plan is our most comprehensive, all-inclusive program—built for intended parents who want maximum predictability and support without worrying about ballooning costs.



## What Goes Into The Fees?

### **Intended Parent Attorney (\$7,000–\$15,000)**

These fees cover the cost of hiring an independent attorney to represent the intended parents in drafting the Gestational Carrier Agreement, reviewing contracts, and filing all necessary legal paperwork related to parental rights. This is paid directly to the attorney.

### **Surrogate Attorney (\$3,000–\$5,000)**

Your surrogate will have her own independent legal counsel to review the contract and represent her interests. These fees are typically paid by the intended parents directly to the surrogate's attorney and vary by state and firm.

### **Independent Escrow Setup (\$1,500)**

We require an escrow account to hold and disburse all surrogate-related payments throughout the journey. The setup fee is typically \$1,500, and the account is usually funded with \$125,000 to \$200,000 at the time of legal contract signing.

### **Surrogate Base Compensation (\$60,000+)**

The surrogate receives base compensation for her time, commitment, and the physical and emotional toll of pregnancy. Compensation starts at \$60,000 and can increase to \$75,000–\$120,000 for experienced surrogates.

### **Surrogate Bonus Milestone Payments (\$8,000)**

Surrogates are also eligible for milestone-based bonuses, including \$500 at the start of medications, \$1,500 on the day of embryo transfer, \$4,000 upon completion of screening and contract signing, \$1,000 for maternity clothing, and \$1,000 for housekeeping support.

### **Monthly Miscellaneous Expense Reimbursement (~\$4,000)**

Surrogates receive \$300 per month beginning at legal contract signing through the completion of their postpartum recovery period. This stipend covers items such as gas, prenatal vitamins, childcare for appointments, and other minor recurring costs.

### **Incidentals and Reimbursable Items (\$2,500–\$10,000)**

As needed throughout the journey, surrogates may require travel reimbursement, doula or prenatal massage services, invasive procedures, or lost wages due to work restrictions. These are paid on an as-needed basis and vary by individual journey.

### **Medical and IVF Clinic Fees (\$30,000+)**

These fees are paid directly to your fertility clinic and include embryo transfer, surrogate screening, medication protocols, and general IVF coordination. This does not include costs related to egg donation, embryo creation, or storage.

### **Outside Monitoring (\$500–\$3,000)**

If the surrogate lives more than 50 miles from the IVF clinic, additional monitoring may be done locally. This can include bloodwork, ultrasounds, and other services coordinated with the primary clinic.



## What Goes Into The Fees? (cont.)

### **Travel Expenses (\$5,000)**

Intended parents are responsible for covering travel-related costs for the surrogate, which may include airfare, lodging, meals, and transportation to and from appointments. Travel is most commonly required for the embryo transfer, medical screening, or delivery if the surrogate lives in a different state. The estimated total for travel throughout the journey is approximately \$5,000, but may vary based on distance and the number of required trips.

### **Surrogate Health Insurance (\$15,000– \$30,000)**

If the surrogate does not already have a maternity-inclusive health insurance policy, a new policy will need to be secured. This cost varies depending on the time of year (open enrollment vs. private placement), coverage needs, and plan structure.

### **Insurance Brokerage, Claims Management & Policy Placement (\$2,275)**

Roots works with a trusted third-party broker who evaluates available plans, places the surrogate on a viable policy, and manages all claims throughout the journey. This one-time fee covers the full scope of brokerage services and helps ensure seamless coverage and reimbursement.

### **Life Insurance for Surrogate (\$1,800)**

A one-year, \$500,000 life insurance policy is required for all surrogates. This provides peace of mind and protection for her family in the unlikely event of a serious complication during pregnancy.



# Next Steps



## Meet with Brooke

(click here)

*It all started with a dream: to create an agency we would want to use if we were intended parents or surrogates.*

*With over a decade of experience and over 500 babies, we are just that. We offer personalized journeys families deserve with fully vetted, connective surrogates and a network of trusted professionals and partners.*

*Not all agencies are created equally, and we take pride in being one of the exceptional few. From the initial call through the completion of your story, this is where your family's journey begins, and we are honored to walk it with you.*

**~Brooke Kimbrough, CEO and former surrogate**

# Ready to get started?

Schedule time to meet with Brooke now!

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