

Setting Expectations for Surrogacy Arrangements

This is a list of conversation-starters for intended parents, surrogates and their partners, to consider before they proceed with the surrogacy arrangement. The list is not exhaustive but can be used to establish expectations and reach agreements.

Expectations – Before conception

- Communication – frequency, methods
- Timeframes and deadlines
- Legal Advice – which lawyers and when
- Counselling – clinic or private and when
- Childcare arrangements for surrogacy appointments
- Meeting up and spending time together
- When to tell others of the plans
- Social media sharing and tagging
- Number of pregnancy attempts
- Managing disappointments and hurdles
- Embryo creation and quality
- Geographical logistics
- Political views
- Taking time out from surrogacy
- Mental health support

Expectations – During pregnancy

- Communication
- Vaccination (of surrogate and intended parents)
- Termination of pregnancy
- Coping with pregnancy loss
- Birth and parenting classes
- Genetic and diagnostic testing
- Hospital and healthcare provider choice
- Health and fitness
- Help at home for surrogate family
- Childcare
- Spending time together
- Social media sharing, tagging
- Announcing pregnancy to others
- Counselling and mental-health support
- Attending appointments
- Scans
- Asking for help

Expectations – Labour and birth

- Birth plans – hospital, home
- Type of birth, pain relief
- Support persons, doula/private midwife
- C-section arrangements – who will be in theatre
- When will the surrogate tell the intended parents she is in labour
- Childcare arrangements
- Travel to hospital
- Birth photographer
- Who ‘catches’ the baby
- Skin-to-skin
- Cord clamping
- Colostrum, milk and feeding
- Rooms and arrangements at hospital
- Leaving hospital
- Surrogate’s family to visit
- Placenta
- Announcing the birth to others
- Social media sharing and tagging

Expectations – Fourth trimester and beyond

- Vaccinations
- Medical treatment
- Cuddle time with surrogate
- Contact arrangements – visits, frequency, logistics
- Photographs
- Social media sharing and tagging
- Timeframe for intended parents to return home (if not local)
- Milk and feeding
- Paperwork for birth registration and Parentage Order
- Counselling and mental-health support
- Ongoing future contact
- Language and roles – Aunty, Birth Mother, Tummy Mummy...?
- Asking for help

Expectations – Financial arrangements

- Intended parents’ capacity to fund the surrogacy
- List of expected expenses
- Surrogate and partner’s time off for appointments
- Payment arrangements – reimbursement, EFT, bank card access for surrogate
- Communication – appointing ‘spokespersons’ for each couple