



The Parent Information Center of Delaware

Inform. Educate. Advocate.

Surrogate Parent Program

AT A GLANCE

The provision for appointing Surrogate Parents was established under the federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA. Part C of IDEA refers to children who are from birth to three years of age. Part B refers to children from three to 21 years of age. IDEA describes how eligible children with disabilities whose parent(s) cannot be identified or located, are entitled to have an adult appointed who can assume “parental rights and responsibilities”, and advocate on their behalf for Early Intervention or Special Education and Related Services. The Surrogate Parent Program is administered by the [Parent Information Center](#) (PIC) through a contract with the [Delaware Department of Education](#) (DOE).



Who serves as a Surrogate Parent?

Foster parents, CASAs (Court Appointed Special Advocates), child attorneys, retired educators and other volunteers (with various backgrounds and experiences) who meet the qualifications can serve as Surrogate Parents.

What are the qualifications to become a Surrogate Parent?

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Be a legal resident of the United States
- Be competent to represent the child
- Not have any personal or professional conflicts
- Be able to converse in the primary communication mode of the child
- Have knowledge and skills to adequately represent the child in the Early Intervention or Special Education process

Although not required, it is helpful to have knowledge of the Early Intervention system, Special Education process and/or Foster Care system.

What is the role of a Surrogate Parent?

Once appointed by DOE, a Surrogate Parent acts as the child’s “parent” for Early Intervention or Special Education purposes only.

Steps to take if you are interested in volunteering your time as a Surrogate Parent for a child in foster care:

- Complete the Application and Agreement posted on www.picofdel.org
- Submit Application and Agreement to the Surrogate Parent Program
- Wait to be contacted by the Program Coordinator with instructions for completing the on-line training
- Complete on-line training
- Participate in a phone interview with the Program Coordinator

For more information visit www.picofdel.org or call (302) 999-7394

PIC is a statewide non-profit organization with a mission to advance effective parent engagement in education.