

## Parents or surrogate: Who decides whether to abort pregnancy?

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.**

When a woman agrees to become a gestational surrogate—meaning she'll gestate an IVF-created embryo as it grows into a fetus—she and the commissioning parents will typically sign a legally binding contract. The terms vary widely from contract to contract and state to state, but the vast majority will include a clause allowing the parents to make decisions about abortion.

In surrogacy cases, the most common reason for abortion is multiple pregnancies. And of course, the likelihood of becoming pregnant with twins, triplets, and even four or five fetuses increases once IVF enters the picture—doctors will often implant multiple embryos at a time, to increase the chance that one will take. For various reasons—health, financial, or otherwise—parents whose surrogate ends up carrying multiple fetuses may request to “selectively reduce,” or abort one or more.

But as a recent case illustrates, those contracts aren't necessarily airtight. In January, Melissa Cook, a 47-year-old California surrogate currently pregnant with triplets, sued the commissioning father, a single 50-year-old Georgia postal worker, who wanted her to abort one of the fetuses. (The egg used to create the three embryos implanted in Cook was sourced from an anonymous, 20-something donor.) Cook, who is pro-life, filed a lawsuit in Los Angeles Superior Court, claiming California's surrogacy law violates due process, as well as equal-protection rights guaranteed in the Constitution.

**Read full, original post:** [When Parents and Surrogates Disagree on Abortion](#)