

# NYA AFF

New York Attorneys for Adoption & Family Formation



Rebecca L. Mendel & Laurie B. Goldheim, *Co-Presidents*      Denise Seidelman, *Vice President*  
Kathleen A. DiPaola, *Immediate Past President* | Jeanine Castagna, *Secretary* | William Singer, *Treasurer*  
Board of Trustees Brian Esser | Robin Fleischner | Jennifer Maas | Janene Oleaga | Joseph R. Williams

April 20, 2026

Tricia Curley  
*Director*  
*Gestational Surrogacy Program*  
Empire State Plaza  
Corning Tower  
Albany, NY 12237

Matthew Kohn, PhD  
*Director*  
*Tissue Resources Program*  
Empire State Plaza  
Corning Tower  
Albany, NY 12237

Re:    NYS DOH February 20, 2026 Letter: “*Potential Signs of Gestational Surrogacy Abuse and Human Trafficking*”

Dear Mr. Curley and Dr. Kohn,

We are writing to you today on behalf of the members of New York Attorneys for Adoption & Family Formation (NYA AFF), an association of attorneys dedicated to shaping the future of adoption, assisted reproduction and child welfare in New York (<https://nyaaff.com/>). Many of our attorneys devote a large portion of their practices to working with Gestational Surrogates and Intended Parents on the legal aspects involved in Gestational Surrogacy Arrangements, and several of our members were instrumental in the drafting of the legislation that ultimately became the New York Child Parent Security Act (enacted February 15, 2021) as well as the later revisions adopted in December 2024.

April 20, 2026  
Page 2

[www.NYA AFF.com](http://www.NYA AFF.com)



Recently, your letter dated February 20, 2026 on the subject “*Potential Signs of Gestational Surrogacy Abuse and Human Trafficking*” was brought to our attention. We appreciate the need to protect against human trafficking and abuse and understand the desire of DOH to want to raise awareness in New York as to possible signs of potential exploitation. It is helpful for those not educated on trafficking to help spot potential abuses and warning signs, and the links and resources provided in your letter are important aids for those in need. We do however have some concerns that looking at surrogacy through such a critical lens could stigmatize surrogacy and have the potential to harm those Intended Parents and Surrogates who are legitimately pursuing surrogacy in New York. We would welcome the opportunity to open a dialogue between us, where we could discuss the balancing of all of these interests going forward.

If you would be amenable to discussing and further collaborating, please reach out to us at your convenience: [rmendel@lawrsm.com](mailto:rmendel@lawrsm.com) and [lgoldheim@adoptionrights.com](mailto:lgoldheim@adoptionrights.com).

Sincerely,

*Rebecca Mendel*

Rebecca Mendel, Esq.

*Laurie Goldheim*

Laurie B. Goldheim, Esq.

Co-Presidents, NYAAFF

