



Child support and financial assistance for your child

If two parents separate, one may have to pay child support to the other as financial support for the costs of raising the children. Whether, and how much, child support will have to be paid depends on a number of factors, including how much each parent earns and how much time the children live with each parent. Inland Revenue (IRD) calculates how much child support needs to be paid.

If a mother already pays child support before going to prison:

If a mother is going to prison for 13 weeks or more, she can apply to IRD to have child support payments stopped or reduced while she is in prison. She may get them stopped if she earns no income while in prison. If she wishes to stop paying child support, she should apply through IRD and get her unit manager to sign and stamp [this](#) form.

If a mother earns money from investments, she may have to pay some child support, depending on how much she earns from the investments. She may still be able to have her payments reduced if her income has dropped by at least 15%. She should apply through IRD for this.

Mothers need to contact IRD as soon as they are released to ensure they start paying the right amount of child support again.

If a mother used to receive child support before going to prison:

If a mother used to receive child support before she came to prison, the person looking after her child can apply for the child support through IRD [here](#).

If the mother has her child with her in prison in the Mothers with Babies Unit, and was receiving child support before she went to prison, she will be able to continue receiving child support payments in prison.

To apply for child support

If a mother has her child with her in prison and she is separated from the father permanently (not just while in prison) she can apply for child support from the father's income through IRD. She may also come to a private agreement with the father without going through IRD [here](#) if she wishes.

Other financial assistance for child(ren)

The person looking after an incarcerated mother's child may be able to get some additional help from Work and Income, depending on their current financial situation. Contact Work and Income to discuss your situation.

If the child is in a mothers and babies unit, the mother may be able to receive a family assistance benefit.

Prisons supply basic items for children of mothers who are incarcerated. The mothers are responsible for buying clothing and food for their child(ren).