

Mothers with Babies Unit (MBUs)

Information for Women





You - if you are pregnant or have a baby in your care under the age of 24 months you can apply to live in the MBU



Your baby - your baby can stay with you until they are 24 months old



Social Worker - Social Workers in the prison complete the MBU applications with you



Support Service Worker - a Support Service Worker will work with you in the MBU and can help you with day to day parenting support



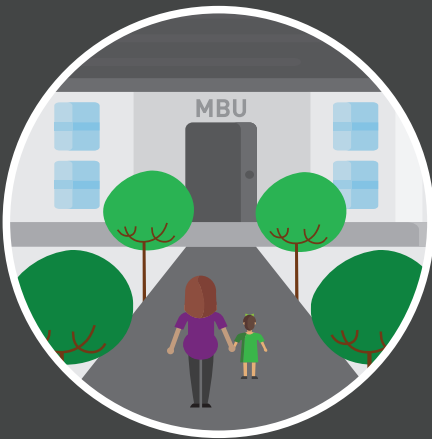
Prison Director - the Prison Director is in charge of the prison and makes the final decision on MBU applications



Family/Whānau - your whānau will be kept connected to support you and your baby

Mothers with Babies Unit (MBUs)

What is a Mothers with Babies Unit (MBU)?

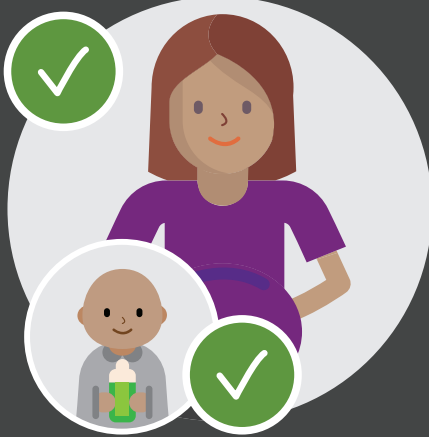


- The MBU is a type of self-care unit where mothers and their babies can stay
- There is an MBU in all of the women's self care units



- They are a comfortable and safe place for mothers and babies to bond, grow and learn
- Babies can stay until they are 24 months old

Can I live in the Mothers with Babies Unit?



You can apply to live in the MBU if you:

1. Are pregnant **OR**
 2. Have a baby under 24 months old that you care for in the community
- You do not need to be sentenced and you can be any security classification
 - You can be from overseas
 - You need to be drug free, and motivated to care for your child in the unit

How do I apply to live in the Mothers with Babies Unit?



You can apply any time

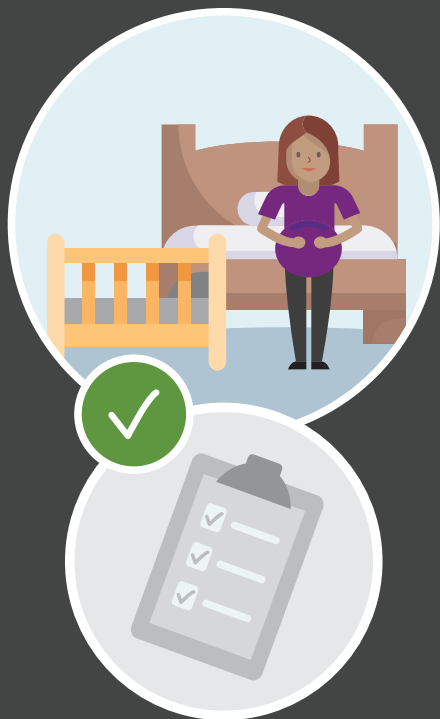
- Talk to your Social Worker or another staff member if you want to apply
- A Social Worker will complete an assessment with you and ask some questions about your health and wellbeing, any needs your baby may have, and why you would like to live in the MBU
- They will also want to talk to your family and support people
- You will need to identify whānau or someone else to care for your baby if there is an emergency or if you can not look after them
- We will need to talk to Oranga Tamariki to ask their views and ensure your baby has the safest placement for them
- Sometimes this process can take some time. We will complete the application process as quickly as possible, and keep you updated

How is the decision made to accept or decline my application?



- A panel will look at your application and make a recommendation to the Prison Director
- Your Social Worker will be there to talk on your behalf
- The Prison Director will make the final decision
- The decision must be made with the best interest of your baby in mind
- You will be given the decision and reasons for it in writing

What happens if my application is accepted?



- You will need to sign a Parenting Agreement, which outlines the conditions for staying in the MBU
- You can begin working with the support service worker to make a plan for you and your baby, including when to move in to the unit
- You can stay until you are released or when your baby turns two, whichever comes first

What happens if my application is declined?



- If your application is declined you will be told why
- If you do not agree with the reasons, you can ask for it to be reviewed
- This must be within 14 days of you getting the decision in writing
- Do this by using the complaints process
- If you need support to complete this you can ask a staff member

Feeding and bonding room



- If you can't or don't want to stay in the MBU, your baby may be able to visit you in the feeding and bonding room
- This is for children under the age of 24 months
- It is a comfortable room with a couch and change table
- You can use it to spend time with and feed or bond with your baby
- Your baby's caregiver or whānau would need to bring them in
- These visits can happen as often as every day
- Caregivers / whānau who bring your baby for visits must be approved visitors
- Talk to the Social Worker if you would like to apply

What is it like living in the Mothers with Babies Unit?



- You and your baby will have your own room and your own things
- The prison will provide a cot, but you will need to provide clothing, nappies, and toys
- You may be able to get support from Work and Income to cover these costs. Staff will help you apply
- You will do your own cooking and cleaning



- The lounge and kitchen are shared with up to three other mothers in the unit and their babies
- You will be the main caregiver for your baby



- There is a support service on site to help you with parenting and they will create a plan for caring for your baby to ensure your baby gets access to the right services
- Whānau who are approved visitors can visit you and your baby in prison

What is it like living in the mothers with babies unit?



Daycare/Kōhanga Reo



Immunisations



A midwife



Tamariki Ora/Plunket



Doctor



You

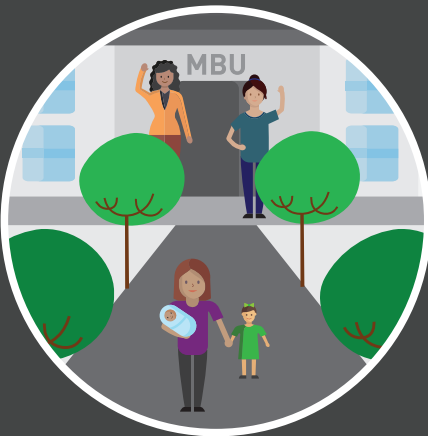
- You and your baby will still be able to access services that exist in the community such as:
 - Doctor
 - Immunisations
 - Midwife
 - Tamariki Ora/Plunket
 - Daycare/Kōhanga Reo
- Your baby can go out to visit whānau
- All prison rules and regulations still apply

Am I still able to do my programmes?



- Yes, you are able to do your programmes while in the MBU
- Sometimes you will be able to take your baby with you, but if you can't then staff will help sort out childcare

What happens when I leave the MBU?



- You will leave the unit if;
 - You are released
 - Your baby leaves the unit
 - Your baby turns 2 years old
- It is best if you and your baby leave prison together, but sometimes this is not possible. Where it is not possible, we will support you and your whānau to create a plan that is best for you and your baby
- Your support worker or social worker will help you make a plan for you and your baby which will include things such as;
 - where to live when you leave prison
 - who might help you
 - daycare or kōhanga reo for your baby
 - finding a doctor
- If you would like, the support service can refer you to services in your home town and keep in touch to make sure you are doing okay

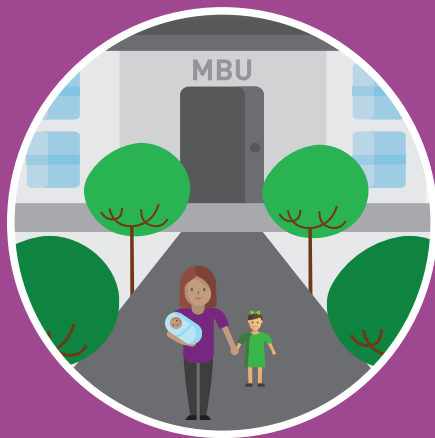
For more information



If you would like to apply for the MBU or Feeding and Bonding room, or would like more information, talk to your case manager, social worker, unit PCO, or other staff.

Notes

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DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS