

State Child Care Assistance Policies: Arkansas

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2011, a family of three in Arkansas could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$28,345 (153 percent of poverty, 60 percent of state median income).¹
- **Waiting list:** Arkansas had 14,000 children on a waiting list for child care assistance as of February 2011.
- **Parent copayments:** In 2011, a family of three with an income at 100 percent of poverty (\$18,530 a year) receiving child care assistance had no copayment. A family of three with an income at 150 percent of poverty (\$27,795 a year) receiving child care assistance paid \$365 per month, or 16 percent of its income, in copayments.²
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2011, Arkansas's reimbursement rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance were below the federally recommended level—the 75th percentile of current market rates, which is the level designed to give families access to 75 percent of the providers in their community—for some types of care.
 - Arkansas's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Pulaski County was \$457, which was \$11 (2 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
 - Arkansas's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in Pulaski County was \$552, which was equal to the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2011, Arkansas did not pay higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2011, Arkansas allowed parents to qualify for or continue receiving child care assistance for up to 45 days while searching for a job.³

Source: Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, *State Child Care Assistance Policies 2011: Reduced Support for Families in Challenging Times* (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2011). These data reflect policies as of February 2011, unless otherwise indicated.

1 This income limit takes into account a deduction of \$100 per month (\$1,200 a year) that is allowed for an adult household member who works at least 30 hours per week. It is assumed there is one working parent. The stated income limit, in policy, was \$27,145 in February 2011. As of October 2011, the stated income limit was expected to increase to \$29,760 (60 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

2 The state determines copayments based on the cost of care; these copayment amounts were calculated assuming that the family was purchasing care at the state's maximum reimbursement rate for licensed, non-accredited center care for a four-year-old. The copayment amounts were also calculated based on adjusted income, taking into account the state's income deduction.

3 In addition to the 45 days parents could receive child care assistance while searching for a job, a one-time extension of 15 consecutive calendar days could be granted if needed to secure employment. A handwritten statement listing job contacts or documentation of the job search had to be provided in order to receive the extension.