

State Child Care Assistance Policies: California

- **Income eligibility limit:** As of February 2011, a family of three in California could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$45,228 (244 percent of poverty, 68 percent of state median income).¹ As of July 2011, the state's income limit for a family of three was reduced to \$42,216 (228 percent of poverty, 63 percent of state median income).²
- **Waiting list:** California had 187,516 children on a waiting list for child care assistance as of June 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 \$87 per month, or 4 percent of its income, in copayments.
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2011, California'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.
 - California's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Los Angeles County was \$744, which was \$44 (6 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
 - California's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in Los Angeles County was \$1,029, which was \$199 (16 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2011, California did not pay higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2011, California allowed parents to qualify for or continue receiving child care assistance for up to 60 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 Two pilot counties (San Mateo and San Francisco) allowed families already receiving assistance to continue to receive it up to an income of \$54,096 in 2011.
- 2 The previous income limit, \$45,228, was equal to 75 percent of the 2007 state median income. The income limit as of July 2011, \$42,216, was equal to 70 percent of the 2007 state median income.
- 3 Parents could receive child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 60 working days during the contract period; child care assistance was provided for no more than 5 days per week and less than 30 hours per week.