

## State Child Care Assistance Policies: Montana

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2011, a family of three in Montana could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$27,468 (148 percent of poverty, 50 percent of state median income).
- **Waiting list:** Montana had no 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 paid \$62 per month, or 4 percent of its income, in copayments.
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2011, Montana's reimbursement rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance were at the federally recommended level—the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of current market rates, which is the level designed to give families access to 75 percent of the providers in their community.
  - Montana's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in the Billings Region was \$624,<sup>1</sup> which was equal to the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
  - Montana's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in the Billings Region was \$714,<sup>2</sup> which was equal to the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2011, Montana paid higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.
  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in the Billings Region at the highest quality tier was 20 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.
  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in the Billings Region at the highest quality tier was above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2011, Montana allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance for up to 30 days while searching for a job.<sup>3</sup> However, Montana did not allow parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.

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 The state has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.

2 This is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.

3 Parents receiving child care assistance could continue to receive it for up to 30 calendar days following the loss of a job. Parents were required to report a change in employment status within 10 days.