

## State Child Care Assistance Policies: Oklahoma

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2011, a family of three in Oklahoma could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$35,100 (189 percent of poverty, 69 percent of state median income).<sup>1</sup>
- **Waiting list:** Oklahoma 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 \$120 per month, or 8 percent of its income, in copayments. A family of three with an income at 150 percent of poverty (\$27,795 a year) receiving child care assistance paid \$189 per month, or 8 percent of its income, in copayments.
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2011, Oklahoma's reimbursement rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance were below 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.
  - Oklahoma's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Enhanced Area Counties<sup>2</sup> was \$438,<sup>3</sup> which was \$72 (14 percent) below the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
  - Oklahoma's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in Enhanced Area Counties was \$601,<sup>4</sup> which was \$70 (10 percent) below the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2011, Oklahoma paid higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.
  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Enhanced Area Counties at the highest quality tier was 67 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.
  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Enhanced Area Counties at the highest quality tier was still below the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2011, Oklahoma allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance for up to 30 days while searching for a job.<sup>5</sup> However, Oklahoma 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 income limit depends on how many children are in child care. This income limit assumes that the family had two children in subsidized care. The income limit for a family of three with only one child in subsidized care was \$29,100 in 2011.

2 Enhanced Area Counties include 19 out of 77 counties in the state (Caddo, Canadian, Cherokee, Cleveland, Comanche, Creek, Garfield, Kay, Logan, McCurtain, Oklahoma, Ottawa, Payne, Pittsburg, Pottawatomie, Tulsa, Wagoner, Washington, and Woods).

3 The state has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the most common rate level (the level representing the greatest number of providers).

4 This is the most common rate level.

5 Parents could continue to receive child care assistance for up to 30 calendar days while searching for a job if they had been receiving child care assistance for at least 30 days prior to losing a job or completing an education program. Parents could be approved to receive child care assistance while searching for a job no more than twice per calendar year, and must have been employed or going to school for at least 90 calendar days between approval periods.