

State Child Care Assistance Policies: Wisconsin

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2011, a family of three in Wisconsin could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$34,281 (185 percent of poverty, 52 percent of state median income).¹
- **Waiting list:** Wisconsin 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 \$87 per month, or 6 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 \$217 per month, or 9 percent of its income, in copayments.
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2011, Wisconsin'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.
 - Wisconsin's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Zone D² was \$779,³ which was \$134 (15 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
 - Wisconsin's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in Zone D was \$1,005,⁴ which was \$152 (13 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2011, Wisconsin paid higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.
 - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Zone D at the highest quality tier was 10 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.
 - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Zone D at the highest quality tier was still below the 75th percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2011, Wisconsin allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job only until the end of the month in which they lost their previous job. Wisconsin 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 In 2011, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached \$37,060.

2 Zone D is the most urban of the state's four zones and includes Madison and Milwaukee. The state groups its rates into four zones based on level of urbanization using Census data.

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

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