



CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

## STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: **MAINE**

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2015, a family of three in Maine could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$49,475 (246 percent of poverty, 76 percent of state median income).<sup>1</sup>
- **Waiting list:** Maine had no waiting list for child care assistance as of February 2015.
- **Parent copayments:** In 2015, a family of three with an income at 100 percent of poverty (\$20,090 a year) receiving child care assistance in Maine paid \$134 per month, or 8 percent of its income, in copayments. A family of three with an income at 150 percent of poverty (\$30,135 a year) receiving child care assistance paid \$251 per month, or 10 percent of its income, in copayments.
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2015, Maine'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.
  - Maine's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Cumberland County was \$810,<sup>2</sup> which was \$143 (15 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
  - Maine's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in Cumberland County was \$974,<sup>3</sup> which was \$147 (13 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2015, Maine paid higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.
  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Cumberland County 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 Cumberland County at the highest quality tier was still below the 75th percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In February 2015, Maine allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance for up to 8 weeks while searching for a job.<sup>4</sup> However, the state did not allow parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.

Source: Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, Building Blocks: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2015 (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2015). These data reflect policies as of February 2015, unless otherwise indicated.



- 1 As of July 2015, the income limit was increased to \$54,589 (85 percent of the updated state median income estimate).
- 2 The state has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 3 This is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 4 Parents receiving child care assistance can continue to receive it while searching for a job for up to 8 weeks, for up to 20 hours per week, under the policy in effect as of February 2015. The state extended the amount of time parents can continue to receive child care assistance while searching for a job to 12 weeks as of April 2015.

