



CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: *RHODE ISLAND*

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2015, a family of three in Rhode Island could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$35,622 (177 percent of poverty, 47 percent of state median income).¹
- **Waiting list:** Rhode Island 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 Rhode Island paid \$33 per month, or 2 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 \$201 per month, or 8 percent of its income, in copayments.
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2015, Rhode Island'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.
 - Rhode Island's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old was \$680, which was \$186 (21 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
 - Rhode Island's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old was \$814,² which was \$240 (23 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2015, Rhode Island paid higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care for infants and toddlers.³
 - The reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old at the highest quality tier was 5 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.
 - The reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old at the highest quality tier was still below the 75th percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2015, Rhode Island allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance for up to 21 days while searching for a job.⁴ 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 In February 2015, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached \$44,528, under a pilot program begun in October 2013 and extended through September 2016. As of April 2015, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to \$36,162 (180 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to \$45,203 (225 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2015 federal poverty level.
- 2 The state has higher rates for higher-quality care for infants and toddlers; this is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 3 The state began providing higher reimbursement, in the form of monthly awards, for higher-quality care for infants and toddlers as of August 2013. To be eligible for an award, a provider must serve children under age three and at least 10 percent of the children enrolled must receive child care assistance.
- 4 Parents receiving child care assistance can continue to receive it for up to 21 consecutive days from the beginning of a period of temporary unemployment resulting from a job loss or transition between jobs. Parents must report the change in employment within 10 days. Parents are not eligible for continued assistance if they quit without good cause.

