State Child Care Assistance Policies: Arkansas

December 2013

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2013, a family of three in Arkansas could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to $29,760 (152 percent of poverty, 62 percent of state median income).

- **Waiting list:** Arkansas had no waiting list for child care assistance as of February 2013.

- **Parent copayments:** In 2013, a family of three with an income at 100 percent of poverty ($19,530 a year) receiving child care assistance in Arkansas had no copayment. A family of three with an income at 150 percent of poverty ($29,295 a year) receiving child care assistance paid $365 per month, or 15 percent of its income, in copayments.¹

- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2013, Arkansas’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—for some types of care.

  - Arkansas’s monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Pulaski County was $457, which was $11 (2 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.

  - Arkansas’s monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in Pulaski County was $552, which was equal to the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.

- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2013, Arkansas did not pay higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.

- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2013, Arkansas allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance for up to 45 days while searching for a job.² However, the state did not allow parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.³

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¹ The state determines copayments based on the cost of care; these copayment amounts were calculated assuming that the family was purchasing care at the state’s maximum reimbursement rate for licensed, non-accredited center care for a four-year-old.

² In addition to the 45 days parents may continue to receive child care assistance while searching for a job, a one-time extension of 15 consecutive calendar days may be granted if needed to secure employment.

³ The state changed its policy as of July 2012 to no longer allow parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.