State Child Care Assistance Policies: Pennsylvania

December 2013

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2013, a family of three in Pennsylvania could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to $38,180 (195 percent of poverty, 58 percent of state median income).¹

- **Waiting list:** Pennsylvania had 6,183 children on a 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 Pennsylvania paid $130 per month, or 8 percent of its income, in copayments. A family of three with an income at 150 percent of poverty ($29,295 a year) receiving child care assistance paid $225 per month, or 9 percent of its income, in copayments.

- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2013, Pennsylvania’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.
  
  - Pennsylvania’s monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Philadelphia was $707,² which was $51 (7 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
  
  - Pennsylvania’s monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in Philadelphia was $902,³ which was $8 (1 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.

- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2013, Pennsylvania paid higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.
  
  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Philadelphia at the highest quality tier was 13 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.⁴

  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Philadelphia at the highest quality tier was above the 75th percentile of current market rates.

- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2013, Pennsylvania allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance for up to 30 days while searching for a job.⁵ However, the state did not allow parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.

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1 In February 2013, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $44,862. As of May 2013, the income limit to qualify for child care assistance was increased to $39,060 (200 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $45,896 (235 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2013 federal poverty level.

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 As of August 2013, rates for providers at the top two quality levels were increased.

5 Parents who voluntarily leave a job can continue to receive child care assistance during a 13-day notification period. Parents who involuntarily lose a job can continue to receive child care assistance for up to 30 days, in addition to the 13-day notification period. After the 30-day period, parents can remain eligible for child care assistance for up to 30 additional days, but their case is suspended and they cannot receive child care assistance to help pay for child care during this time. Prior to July 1, 2012, parents receiving child care assistance who involuntarily lost a job could continue to receive child care assistance to help pay for child care for up to 60 days.