



CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: ALABAMA

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2016, a family of three in Alabama could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$26,112 (130 percent of poverty, 47 percent of state median income).¹
- **Waiting list:** Alabama had 8,363 children on a waiting list for child care assistance as of February 2016.
- **Parent copayments:** In 2016, a family of three with an income at 100 percent of poverty (\$20,160 a year) receiving child care assistance in Alabama paid \$67 per month, or 4 percent of its income, in copayments.²
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2016, Alabama'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.³
 - Alabama's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in the Birmingham region was \$442, which was \$143 (24 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
 - Alabama's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in the Birmingham region was \$481, which was \$178 (27 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2016, Alabama did not pay higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In February 2016, Alabama did not allow parents to receive child care assistance while searching for a job.⁴

Source: Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, Red Light Green Light: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2016 (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2016). These data reflect policies as of February 2016, unless otherwise indicated.

1 In February 2016, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached \$30,132. As of October 2016, the income limit to qualify for assistance increased to \$26,208 (130 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit increased to \$30,240 (150 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2016 federal poverty level.

2 Children receiving protective services are exempt from copayments on a case-by-case basis.

3 This analysis reflects rates in effect as of February 2016. The state increased reimbursement rates by 6 percent as of August 2016.

4 The state began allowing parents receiving child care assistance to continue to receive it while searching for a job for up to 90 days as of August 2016.

