

CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

## STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: **NEW YORK**

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2016, a family of three in New York could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$40,180 (199 percent of poverty, 55 percent of state median income).<sup>1</sup>
- **Waiting list:** In New York, there were waiting lists for child care assistance at the local district level as of February 2016.<sup>2</sup>
- **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 New York paid as much as \$4 per month, or less than 1 percent of its income, in copayments. A family of three with an income at 150 percent of poverty (\$30,240 a year) receiving child care assistance paid as much as \$296 per month, or 12 percent of its income, in copayments.<sup>3</sup>
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2016, New York'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.<sup>4</sup>
  - New York's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in New York City was \$1,009,<sup>5</sup> which was \$35 (3 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
  - New York's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in New York City was \$1,429,<sup>6</sup> which was \$35 (2 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2016, New York allowed local social services districts to pay higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.<sup>7</sup>
  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in New York City at the highest quality tier was 15 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.
  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in New York City at the highest quality tier was above the 75th percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2016, New York's local social services districts could allow parents receiving child care assistance to continue to receive it while searching for a job for up to 2 weeks, or 4 weeks if child care arrangements would be lost if child care assistance was not continued. Local districts could also choose to allow parents to qualify or continue to receive child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 6 months if the district had funds available.<sup>8</sup>

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 As of June 2016, the income limit was increased to \$40,320 (200 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2016 federal poverty level. Also note that a few small demonstration projects set the income limit at \$51,230 in 2016.
- 2 Statewide data on the total number of children on local waiting lists are not available. Each local district also has the authority to freeze intake and stop adding names to its waiting list.
- 3 Local social services districts set copayments within a state-specified range; these copayments reflect the maximum amount allowed in that range. Also note that families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and participating in their required activity are exempt from copayments; in addition, children receiving protective services, foster children, homeless families, families receiving services to address domestic violence, and families participating in substance abuse treatment programs may be exempted from copayments on a case-by-case basis.
- 4 This analysis reflects rates in effect as of February 2016. The state updated base rates to the 69th percentile of 2015 market rates as of June 2016.
- 5 New York City has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 6 This is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 7 Local social services districts may set reimbursement rates for accredited programs that are up to 15 percent higher than base rates.
- 8 Child care assistance is only provided for the portion of the day a parent documents as directly related to seeking employment. Local districts may impose additional limitations on child care assistance for parents to search for a job.

