



CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: *RHODE ISLAND*

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2016, a family of three in Rhode Island could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$36,162 (179 percent of poverty, 48 percent of state median income).¹
- **Waiting list:** Rhode Island had no 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 Rhode Island paid \$34 per month, or 2 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 \$201 per month, or 8 percent of its income, in copayments.²
- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2016, 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 \$700, which was \$231 (25 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 \$838, which was \$199 (19 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2016, Rhode Island did not pay higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.³
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2016, 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, 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 \$45,203, under a pilot program begun in October 2013 and extended through September 2017. As of April 2016, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to \$36,208 (180 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to \$45,360 (225 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2016 federal poverty level.
- 2 Foster children are exempt from copayments.
- 3 The state temporarily provided higher reimbursement, in the form of monthly awards, for higher-quality providers serving infants and toddlers (when at least 10 percent of the children enrolled by the provider were receiving child care assistance) between August 2013 and December 2015; the state did not provide these awards in 2016.
- 4 In February 2016, parents receiving child care assistance could continue to receive it for up to 21 consecutive days from the beginning of a period of unemployment. Parents had to report the change in employment within 10 days. Parents were not eligible for continued assistance if they quit without good cause. The state planned to extend the amount of time parents receiving child care assistance can continue to receive it while searching for a job to 3 months by the end of 2016.

