

CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: *LOUISIANA*

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2017, a family of three in Louisiana could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$31,860 (156 percent of poverty, 52 percent of state median income).¹
- **Waiting list:** Louisiana had no waiting list for child care assistance as of February 2017.
- **Parent copayments:** In 2017, a family of three with an income at 100 percent of poverty (\$20,420 a year) receiving child care assistance in Louisiana paid \$43 per month, or 3 percent of its income, in copayments. A family of three with an income at 150 percent of poverty (\$30,630 a year) receiving child care assistance paid \$65 per month, or 3 percent of its income, in copayments.²
- **Payment rates:** In 2017, Louisiana's payment 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.
 - Louisiana's monthly payment rate for center care for a four-year-old was \$465,³ which was \$76 (14 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
 - Louisiana's monthly payment rate for center care for a one-year-old was \$487,⁴ which was \$97 (17 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered payment rates:** In 2017, Louisiana had higher payment rates for higher-quality care.⁵
 - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old at the highest quality tier was 20 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.
 - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old at the highest quality tier was above the 75th percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2017, Louisiana allowed parents already receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it while searching for a job until the end of their 12-month eligibility period. However, the state did not allow parents to initially qualify for and begin receiving child care assistance while searching for a job.⁶

Source: Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, *Persistent Gaps: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2017* (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2017). These data reflect policies as of February 2017, unless otherwise indicated.

- 1 As of June 2017, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to \$32,208 (55 percent of state median income) to adjust from the 2014 to the 2015 state median income estimate. As of January 2018, the state planned to begin allowing families already receiving assistance to continue doing so until their income reaches \$49,776 (85 percent of the 2015 state median income).
- 2 The state determines copayments based on the cost of care; these copayments were calculated assuming that the family was purchasing care at the state's maximum base payment rate for center care for a four-year-old. Also note that families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), foster children, homeless families, and families participating in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program are exempt from copayments.
- 3 The state has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
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- 5 For this analysis, bonuses for higher-quality care, which are paid quarterly, are considered as if incorporated into the monthly payment rate.
- 6 The state's employment and training requirements may be waived for parents experiencing homelessness to allow them to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.

