

CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

## STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: *MARYLAND*

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2017, a family of three in Maryland could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$29,990 (147 percent of poverty, 33 percent of state median income).<sup>1</sup>
- **Waiting list:** Maryland had 4,042 children on a waiting list for child care assistance as of February 2017.<sup>2</sup>
- **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 Maryland paid \$244 per month, or 14 percent of its income, in copayments.<sup>3</sup>
- **Payment rates:** In 2017, Maryland'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.<sup>4</sup>
  - Maryland's monthly payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in Region W was \$546,<sup>5</sup> which was \$310 (36 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.<sup>6</sup>
  - Maryland's monthly payment rate for center care for a one-year-old in Region W was \$865,<sup>7</sup> which was \$433 (33 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered payment rates:** In 2017, Maryland had higher payment rates for higher-quality care.
  - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in Region W at the highest quality tier was 26 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.
  - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in Region W at the highest quality tier was still below the 75th percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2017, Maryland allowed parents already receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it for up to 30 consecutive days while searching for a job.<sup>8</sup> However, the state did not allow parents to initially qualify for and begin receiving child care assistance while searching for a job.<sup>9</sup>

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 The state planned to increase its income limit to qualify for assistance to \$55,058 (60 percent of state median income), and to begin allowing families already receiving assistance to continue doing so until their income reaches \$78,013 (85 percent of state median income). The state had not yet determined when these new income limits would be implemented.
- 2 Families receiving or transitioning from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), families receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and children with documented disabilities are served without being placed on the waiting list.
- 3 The state determines copayments based on maximum base payment rates in the region where the family lives. These copayments were calculated assuming the family lived in the region with the highest rates and had a four-year-old in center care. Also note that families receiving TANF or SSI are exempt from copayments.
- 4 This analysis reflects rates in effect as of February 2017. The state increased payment rates by 2 percent as of July 2017.
- 5 The state has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 6 Region W includes Anne Arundel, Calvert, Carroll, Charles, and Prince George's Counties.
- 7 This is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 8 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 as of November 2017.
- 9 Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are applying for or receiving TANF and participating in an approved TANF activity.

