

CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: *MISSOURI*

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2017, a family of three in Missouri could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$27,816 (136 percent of poverty, 45 percent of state median income).¹
- **Waiting list:** Missouri 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 Missouri paid \$108 per month, or 6 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 \$210 per month, or 8 percent of its income, in copayments.²
- **Payment rates:** In 2017, Missouri'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.
 - Missouri's monthly payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in St. Louis County was \$406,³ which was \$372 (48 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
 - Missouri's monthly payment rate for center care for a one-year-old in St. Louis County was \$695,⁴ which was \$318 (31 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered payment rates:** In 2017, Missouri had higher payment rates for higher-quality care.
 - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in St. Louis County 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 in St. Louis County at the highest quality tier was still below the 75th percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2017, Missouri allowed parents already receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it for up to 90 days while searching for a job.⁵ However, the state did not allow parents to initially qualify for and begin receiving child care assistance while searching for a job.

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 In February 2017, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached \$43,344 (215 percent of the 2016 federal poverty level).
- 2 Children with disabilities who are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, children receiving services through the Department of Mental Health, children with developmental delays, foster children, adoptive children, and children under court-ordered supervision 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.
- 4 This is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 5 Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job until the last day of the month in which the 90th day falls, and can continue receiving it even if they reach the end of their eligibility period before the end of the period allowed for job search.

