

CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

## STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: *WEST VIRGINIA*

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2017, a family of three in West Virginia could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$29,688 (145 percent of poverty, 51 percent of state median income).<sup>1</sup>
- **Waiting list:** West Virginia 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 West Virginia paid \$76 per month, or 4 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 \$119 per month, or 5 percent of its income, in copayments.<sup>2</sup>
- **Payment rates:** In 2017, West Virginia's payment rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance were at 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.
  - West Virginia's monthly payment rate for center care for a four-year-old was \$606,<sup>3</sup> which was equal to the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
  - West Virginia's monthly payment rate for center care for a one-year-old was \$693,<sup>4</sup> which was equal to the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered payment rates:** In 2017, West Virginia had higher payment rates for higher-quality care.
  - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old at the highest quality tier was 14 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, West Virginia allowed parents to initially qualify for and begin receiving child care assistance while searching for a job, and allowed parents already receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it while searching for a job, for up to 3 months.<sup>5</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 In February 2017, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached \$36,612. As of July 2017, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to \$30,636 (150 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to \$37,776 (185 percent of poverty), to adjust from the 2014 to the 2017 federal poverty level.
- 2 Foster families and families receiving protective services 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 receiving child care assistance can continue to receive it while searching for a job for up to 3 months even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 3-month period.

