



CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES: **MAINE**

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2018, a family of three in Maine could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$56,227 (271 percent of poverty, 84 percent of state median income).¹
- **Waiting list:** Maine had no waiting list for child care assistance as of February 2018.
- **Parent copayments:** In 2018, a family of three with an income at 100 percent of poverty (\$20,780 a year) receiving child care assistance in Maine paid \$139 per month, or 8 percent of its income, in copayments. A family of three with an income at 150 percent of poverty (\$31,170 a year) receiving child care assistance paid \$260 per month, or 10 percent of its income, in copayments.²
- **Payment rates:** In February 2018, Maine'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.³
 - Maine's monthly payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in Cumberland County was \$909,⁴ which was \$212 (19 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
 - Maine's monthly payment rate for center care for a one-year-old in Cumberland County was \$1,057,⁵ which was \$255 (19 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered payment rates:** In 2018, Maine had higher payment rates for higher-quality care.
 - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in Cumberland County at the highest quality tier was 10 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.
 - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in Cumberland County at the highest quality tier was still below the 75th percentile of current market rates.⁶
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2018, Maine allowed parents already receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it for up to 12 weeks while searching for a job.⁷ 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, Overdue for Investment: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2018 (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2018). These data reflect policies as of February 2018, unless otherwise indicated.



- 1 As of April 2018, the income limit was increased to \$56,575 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.
- 2 Copayments for foster children and children living with a legal guardian are based on the child's income only.
- 3 This analysis reflects payment rates as of February 2018. The state increased base payment rates for center care and family child care for all age groups to the 75th percentile of 2018 market rates as of June 2018.
- 4 The state has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 5 This is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.
- 6 This analysis reflects tiered payment rates as of February 2018. Since the state's tiered rates are calculated based on base payment rates, the increase in the state's base rates to the 75th percentile of 2018 market rates as of June 2018 raised its tiered rates as well.
- 7 Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 12 weeks even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 12-week period.

