



**NATIONAL  
WOMEN'S  
LAW CENTER**

Justice for Her. Justice for All.

FEBRUARY 2020 | FACT SHEET

**CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING**

## State Child Care Assistance Policies: Missouri

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2019, a family of three in Missouri could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$27,816 (130 percent of poverty, 43 percent of state median income).<sup>1</sup>
- **Waiting list:** Missouri had no waiting list for child care assistance as of February 2019.
- **Parent copayments:** In 2019, a family of three with an income at 100 percent of poverty (\$21,330 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 (\$31,995 a year) receiving child care assistance paid \$210 per month, or 8 percent of its income, in copayments.<sup>2</sup>
- **Payment rates:** In 2019, 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.<sup>3</sup>
  - Missouri's monthly payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in St. Louis was \$406,<sup>4</sup> which was \$677 (62 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 was \$695,<sup>5</sup> which was \$713 (51 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered payment rates:** In 2019, Missouri had higher payment rates for higher-quality care.
  - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in St. Louis 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 at the highest quality tier was still below the 75th percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2019, Missouri allowed parents already receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it for up to 90 days while searching for a job.<sup>6</sup> 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, Early Progress: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2019 (Washington, DC: National Women’s Law Center, 2019). These data reflect policies as of February 2019, unless otherwise indicated.

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- 1 In February 2019, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached \$43,344. As of April 2019, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to \$29,448 (138 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to \$45,876 (215 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2019 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, children under court-ordered supervision, and homeless families are exempt from copayments.
  - 3 This analysis is based on payment rates as of February 2019. The state increased payment rates as of August 2019.
  - 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 Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job until the last day of the month in which the 90th day allowed for job search falls. Parents can continue receiving child care assistance until the end of this time period even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of the time limit for job search.