



**NATIONAL
WOMEN'S
LAW CENTER**

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FEBRUARY 2020 | FACT SHEET

CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

State Child Care Assistance Policies: Wisconsin

- **Income eligibility limit:** In 2019, a family of three in Wisconsin could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to \$39,461 (185 percent of poverty, 53 percent of state median income).¹
- **Waiting list:** Wisconsin 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 Wisconsin paid \$120 per month, or 7 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 \$251 per month, or 9 percent of its income, in copayments.²
- **Payment rates:** In 2019, Wisconsin'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.
 - Wisconsin's monthly payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in Milwaukee County was \$874,³ which was \$253 (22 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
 - Wisconsin's monthly payment rate for center care for a one-year-old in Milwaukee County was \$1,181,⁴ which was \$297 (20 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.
- **Tiered payment rates:** In 2019, Wisconsin had higher payment rates for higher-quality care.
 - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in Milwaukee County at the highest quality tier was 28 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.
 - The payment rate for center care for a four-year-old in Milwaukee County at the highest quality tier was still slightly below the 75th percentile of current market rates.
- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2019, Wisconsin allowed parents already receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it for up to 3 months 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.⁶

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.

- 1 In 2019, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached \$62,886 (85 percent of state median income).
- 2 Families with court-ordered kinship or guardianship care, foster families, and teen parents attending high school are exempt from copayments.
- 3 The state has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the most common rate level (the level representing the greatest number of providers).
- 4 This is the most common rate level.
- 5 Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months or until the end of their eligibility period, whichever comes first.
- 6 Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are participating in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Tribal TANF, or the FoodShare Employment and Training program.