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NATIONAL  
WOMEN'S  
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**EMERGENCY  
RESPONSE:**  
**CHANGES IN  
STATE CHILD  
CARE ASSISTANCE  
POLICIES DURING  
THE PANDEMIC**

by KAREN SCHULMAN



**fight**s for gender justice—in the courts, in public policy, and in society—working across the issues that are central to the lives of women and girls. NWLC uses the law in all its forms to change culture and drive solutions to the gender inequity that shapes society and to break down the barriers that harm everyone—especially those who face multiple forms of discrimination, including women of color, LGBTQ people, and low-income women and families. For more than 45 years, the organization has been on the leading edge of every major legal and policy victory for women.

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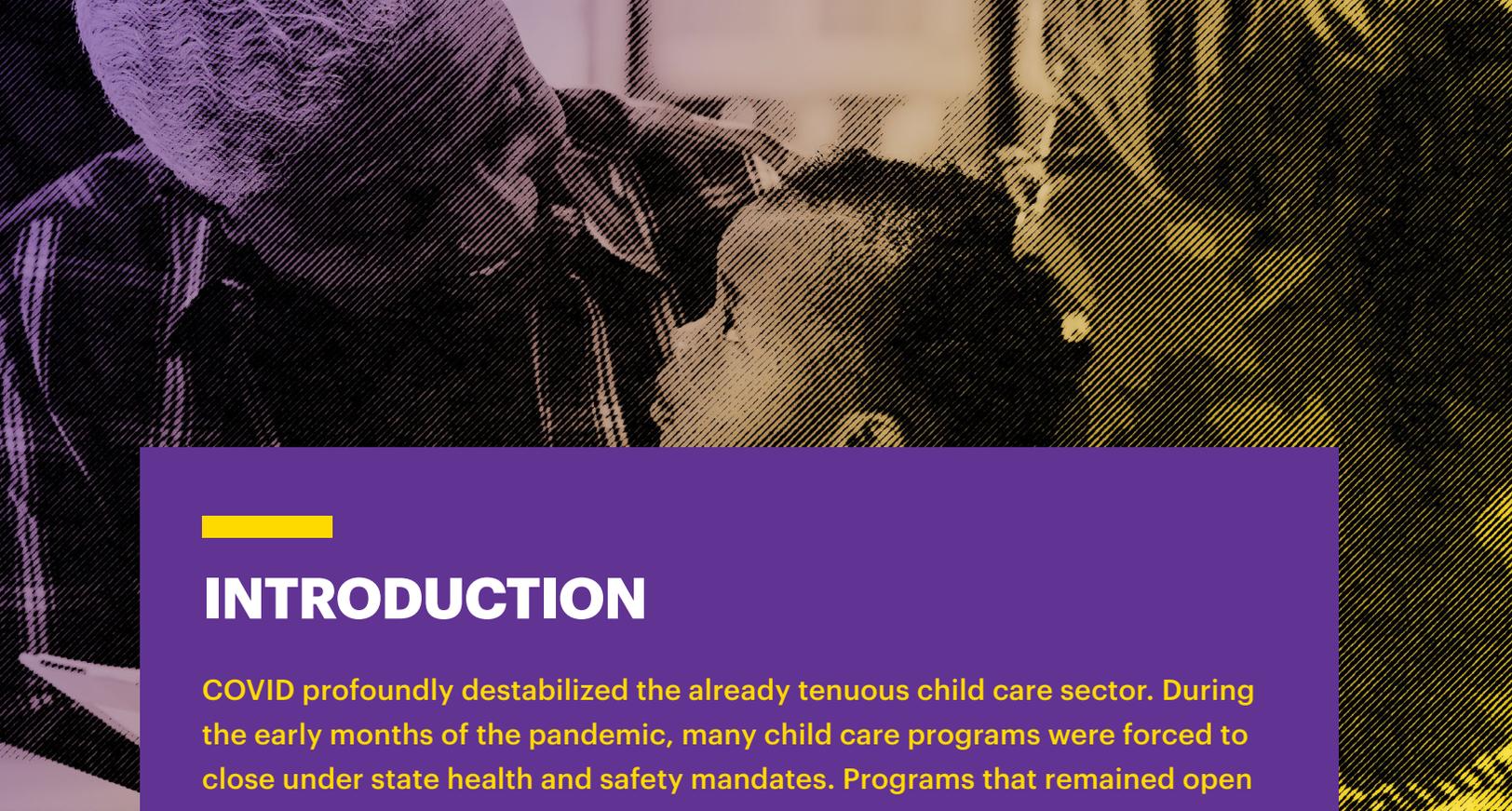
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## INTRODUCTION

COVID profoundly destabilized the already tenuous child care sector. During the early months of the pandemic, many child care programs were forced to close under state health and safety mandates. Programs that remained open or reopened during the crisis struggled with new health and safety protocols that increased costs. Many programs also saw a drop in enrollment as some parents had concerns about safety, and other parents decided not to use child care while they were working from home or unemployed. As a result, child care programs, which already had very tight margins prior to the pandemic, have experienced even more intense financial pressures during the pandemic.

To the extent that child care programs have been able to survive through the pandemic, it is due to the resilience and persistence of the child care workforce as well as significant federal—and in some cases, state—investments in child care. These funds were a crucial supplement to existing funding for the major federal child care program, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), which provides funds to states to help families afford child care and improve the quality of care. CCDBG had long been vastly underfunded, even prior to the crisis.

### NEW CHILD CARE FUNDING WAS PROVIDED THROUGH THREE LEGISLATIVE MEASURES:

**The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act**, signed into law on March 27, 2020, appropriated an additional \$3.5 billion in supplemental child care discretionary funds.<sup>1</sup>

**The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act**, signed into law on December 27, 2020, included \$10 billion in supplemental child care discretionary funding.

**The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**, signed into law on March 11, 2021, included \$14.99 billion in supplemental child care discretionary funds and \$23.975 billion for child care stabilization grants, and increased annual mandatory child care funding by \$3.55 billion.<sup>2</sup>

States have until September 30, 2022, to obligate (commit) their CARES and CRRSA supplemental child care funds and their ARPA child care stabilization funds, and until September 30, 2023, to liquidate (expend) these funds. States have until September 30, 2023, to obligate their ARPA child care discretionary funds and until September 30, 2024, to liquidate these funds.

CARES funding helped states implement beneficial policy changes in the initial stages of the pandemic. Although not all states have made final decisions about how to spend more recent child care funding through CRRSA and ARPA—as states have taken time to weigh priorities and ensure the equitable use of funds—these new funding streams have helped or will help many states extend, resume, or newly adopt more generous policies.

This new funding for child care, together with federal guidance that allowed and even encouraged state action, made it possible for states to adopt and revise policies to help families and providers weather the crisis. This report examines policy changes that states made in response to the pandemic in six key areas. The report's findings demonstrate that every state made temporary changes in one or more of these policy areas in response to the pandemic.

- **Income eligibility limits for child care assistance:** Approximately half of the states expanded income eligibility for child care assistance during the pandemic by increasing or waiving income limits in some or all circumstances.
- **Copayments required of families receiving child care assistance:** All but five states waived or reduced copayments for some or all families during the pandemic.
- **Eligibility for child care assistance while parents search for a job:** Nearly half of the states extended the amount of time families already receiving child care assistance could continue receiving assistance while a parent searched for a job or began allowing families to initially qualify for assistance while a parent searched for a job during the pandemic.

- **Payment rates for providers serving families receiving child care assistance:** Approximately two-fifths of the states raised payment rates for at least some providers serving families receiving child care assistance during the pandemic.
- **Payment to child care providers for days when children are absent from care:** Nearly all states made their policies on paying providers during children's absent days more generous and flexible during the pandemic.
- **Payment for school-age care:** Forty-four states allowed full-time payment for school-age care or payment to cover school-age care while children attended school remotely during the pandemic.

These changes were intended to make it easier for families to access and retain child care assistance, reduce families' child care cost burdens, offer more reliable income for child care providers, and help cover providers' additional costs during the pandemic.

**Every state made temporary changes  
in one or more of six key policy areas  
in response to the pandemic.**

The pandemic illustrated states' ability to respond to families' and providers' needs during a crisis. As states now look beyond the pandemic crisis, it will be important to learn the lessons and recognize the advantages of policies that were initially adopted only temporarily but that would be valuable to sustain in the long term.

The more generous policies that were adopted during a global crisis can also help families get through their own individual crises in affording child care and help child care providers manage the financial challenges of maintaining their programs even in "normal" times. With significant new federal investments—that are long-term, not temporary—it would be possible to continue and build on these successful policies in developing a strong, resilient child care system that supports children, families, and child care workers.

# METHODOLOGY

The National Women’s Law Center collected the data in this report from state child care administrators in the 50 states and the District of Columbia (counted as a state in this report).

In the fall of 2020, NWLC sent the state administrators a survey requesting data on key child care assistance policies.

As in previous years, NWLC’s survey asked for information about states’ policies on income eligibility limits, waiting lists, parent copayments, provider payment rates, and eligibility for child care assistance for parents searching for a job; this information was published in NWLC’s May 2021 report, *On the Precipice: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2020*. The survey also asked state administrators to report on any on changes specifically made in response to the pandemic in these five key policy areas, as well as in a few other policy areas that were particularly relevant during the pandemic, such as policies on paying providers when children were absent.

In the summer of 2021, NWLC contacted state administrators once again to verify and update the information on changes in their child care assistance policies in response to the pandemic. NWLC obtained supplementary information about states’ policies from documents available on state agencies’ websites.

# INCOME ELIGIBILITY LIMITS FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

Twenty-five states expanded eligibility for child care assistance during the pandemic by increasing and/or waiving income limits in some or all circumstances (see *Table 1*).

A number of states waived or increased their income eligibility limits for essential workers, to ensure that they had access to needed child care and to reduce administrative burdens during a challenging time. A few states expanded eligibility limits for all families, recognizing that many families faced increased costs or financial and other strains during the pandemic, or were experiencing income fluctuations, making it difficult to capture their true financial status or economic security based on income levels at a single point in time.

- Five states increased the income limit for child care assistance for all families (Connecticut, Idaho, Oregon, South Carolina, and Utah).
- Virginia increased the income limit for child care assistance for families with young children.
- New York allowed localities to increase the income limit for child care assistance for all families.
- Thirteen states waived the income limit for child care assistance for essential workers (Alabama, Arkansas, California, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia).
- Four states increased the income limit for child care assistance for essential workers (Arizona,<sup>3</sup> Kansas, North Carolina,<sup>4</sup> and Texas).
- Oklahoma waived the income limit for child care assistance for essential workers needing in-home care and job seekers who lost employment during the pandemic.
- Hawaii waived the income limit for child care assistance for families impacted by the public health emergency.

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Most of these states adopted their changes in income eligibility in March or April 2020, at the start of the pandemic, but a few states adopted their changes later in 2020 or even in 2021.

- Eleven states changed their income eligibility policies in March 2020 (Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and West Virginia).
- Eight states changed their income eligibility policies in April 2020 (Alabama, Arizona, California, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, New Jersey, and North Carolina).
- Oklahoma changed its income eligibility policy in May 2020.
- Arkansas changed its income eligibility policy in June 2020.
- Two states changed their income eligibility policies in March 2021 (Idaho and Virginia).
- Connecticut changed its income eligibility policy in July 2021.
- South Carolina did not report when it began waiving its income limit for essential workers.

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In most cases, these income eligibility limit changes were temporary and have already expired, but in some cases, the changes have remained in place—and may ultimately set the stage for permanent changes.

- Two states kept their income eligibility changes in effect until May 2020 (North Carolina and Texas).
- Four states kept their income eligibility changes in effect until June 2020 (California, Illinois, Louisiana, and New Mexico).
- Three states kept their income eligibility changes in effect until July 2020 (Maine, Maryland, and New Jersey).
- Mississippi kept its income eligibility change in effect until November 2020.
- Arkansas kept its income eligibility change in effect until January 2021.

- New York kept its income eligibility change in effect until June 2021.
- Tennessee kept its income eligibility change in effect until September 2021.
- Two states expected to keep their income eligibility changes in effect until December 2021 (Alabama and Virginia).
- Idaho planned to keep its income eligibility change in effect until at least March 2022.
- Oklahoma planned to keep its income eligibility change in effect until May 2022.
- Arizona had a higher income limit in effect for certain essential workers from April 2020 through August 2020, and again from December 2020 through September 2021.<sup>5</sup>
- South Carolina waived its income eligibility limit for essential workers until August 2020, and then increased its income eligibility limit for all families as of October 2020.
- Three states planned to keep their income eligibility changes in effect until the end of the emergency (Hawaii, Kansas, and Oregon)
- Two states reported that they planned to keep their income eligibility changes in effect while funds are available (Connecticut and West Virginia).
- Utah had not yet determined how long its income eligibility change would be in effect.

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A few states that did not change their income limits, including Massachusetts, Missouri, Nevada, and Wyoming, noted that they expanded eligibility in other ways, such as extending families' eligibility period beyond their originally scheduled recertification date, particularly during the early stages of the pandemic.

# COPAYMENTS REQUIRED OF FAMILIES RECEIVING CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

States require most families receiving child care assistance to pay something toward the cost of care, typically using a sliding fee scale that gradually increases the copayment as the family's income increases.

**During the pandemic, 46 states waived and/or reduced copayments for some or all families receiving child care assistance to help ease their burdens at a time of increased financial pressure and uncertainty** (see Table 2). States generally covered the copayments, so providers still received their full expected payment. Having states pick up the copayment may have also offered greater reliability for those providers responsible for collecting the copayment from parents, since it can sometimes be challenging for providers to ensure that parents make their copayment contribution.

- Twenty-nine states waived copayments for all families receiving child care assistance (Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, and Virginia).
- Three states waived copayments for essential workers (Arizona, Ohio, and West Virginia).
- Texas waived copayments for all families receiving child care assistance during April and May 2020 (during most of which time providers were only able to accept children of essential workers), and later began waiving copayments for service industry workers with incomes at or below 75 percent of state median income and for parents who initially qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.
- South Carolina initially waived copayments for essential workers, and then waived copayments for all families who were receiving child care assistance and working or participating in education or training.
- Kansas initially waived copayments for essential workers, and then expanded the population exempt from copayments (from families with incomes below 70 percent of poverty to those with incomes below 100 percent of poverty) and reduced copayments for all other families (to no more than 3 percent of income).
- Washington initially waived copayments for all families receiving child care assistance, and then capped copayments (at no more than \$115 per month).
- Two states initially waived copayments for all families receiving child care assistance, and then reduced copayments by 50 percent (New Hampshire and Vermont).
- Idaho reduced copayments by 50 percent.
- Illinois reduced copayments to \$1 per month.
- Hawaii waived copayments for families impacted by the pandemic.
- Nevada waived copayments on a case-by-case basis.
- New Jersey waived copayments upon request.
- Pennsylvania waived copayments if a family's child care program was closed.
- Colorado allowed localities to waive copayments and reduced copayments for all families receiving child care assistance.
- New York allowed localities to waive copayments.

Most states started waiving or reducing copayments at the beginning of the pandemic in spring 2020, but several states implemented these changes in late 2020 or in 2021.

- Eighteen states began implementing changes in their copayment policies in March 2020 (Colorado, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Vermont, and West Virginia).
- Eighteen states began implementing changes in their copayment policies in April 2020 (Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and Washington).
- Utah began implementing the change in its copayment policies in May 2020.
- Two states began implementing changes in their copayment policies in November 2020 (Alaska and Idaho).
- Seven states began implementing changes in their copayment policies in March, April, May, or June 2021 (Alabama, Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Missouri, North Dakota, and South Dakota).
- Four states plan to keep their copayment changes in effect until 2022 (Georgia, Indiana, Missouri, and Oklahoma).
- Two states plan to keep their copayment changes in effect until 2023 (North Dakota and Utah).
- Hawaii's copayment change is in effect until the end of the emergency.
- Twelve states stopped their copayment reductions or waivers in 2020, but then resumed these copayment changes or made other copayment changes later in 2020 or in 2021 (Alaska, Arizona, California, Iowa, Maine, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington). For example:
  - Arizona's copayment waiver was in effect until August 2020, and then in effect again from December 2020 until September 2021.
  - Iowa's copayment waiver was in effect until October 2020, and then in effect again from February 2021 to June 2021.
  - Maine's copayment waiver was in effect until July 2020, and then resumed in March 2021, and is expected to continue until September 2023.
  - North Carolina's copayment waiver was in effect until August 2020, and then resumed in March 2021, and was expected to continue through at least October 2021.
  - Rhode Island's copayment waiver was in effect until June 2020, and then resumed in February 2021, and is expected to remain in effect until December 2021.

Some of these states had their copayment waivers or reductions in effect only until mid-2020. However, a number of states extended these changes until 2021 or later, resumed the copayment waivers or reductions in 2021, or enacted permanent changes in copayment policies.

- Eight states kept their copayment changes in effect until May, June, July, or August 2020 (District of Columbia, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Montana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Vermont).
- Three states kept their copayment changes in effect until November 2020, December 2020, or January 2021 (Florida, Louisiana, and Oregon).
- Ten states kept or planned to keep their copayment changes in effect until July, August, September, November, or December 2021 (Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New York, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Virginia).
- Kansas's copayment waiver for essential workers is in effect until the end of the emergency, and its copayment reduction for all families receiving child care assistance, which went in effect as of July 2021, is expected to remain in place after the end of the emergency.
- Colorado made its policy allowing counties to waive copayments in emergency situations permanent and kept its copayment reductions in place until June 2021.
- Four states did not report or had not yet determined how long their copayment changes remained or will in place (Arkansas, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and West Virginia).

# ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE WHILE SEARCHING FOR A JOB

With high unemployment rates and more parents searching for work during the pandemic, a number of states changed their policies to make it easier for families to receive child care assistance while a parent was searching for a job.

Having affordable, stable child care can give parents seeking work more time to search for job openings and go on interviews and give parents the reassurance that they will have child care available as soon as they find a job. Stable child care can also give children a sense of security in the midst of other disruptions in their families' lives and in their environments.

Under CCDBG, states must allow families already receiving child care assistance to continue receiving assistance for at least three months while a parent searches for a job; states are not required to allow families to initially qualify for assistance while a parent searches for a job.

**During the pandemic, approximately one-third of the states extended beyond the state's usual limit the amount of time parents already receiving child care assistance when they lost a job could hold onto their assistance** (see *Table 3*). In addition, a number of states that previously did not allow parents to initially qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job began allowing it.

- Sixteen states extended the amount of time allowed for job search for parents already receiving child care assistance.
  - Two states extended the time allowed for job search from three months to six months (Alabama and Arizona).
  - Colorado extended the time allowed for job search from 13 weeks to 24 weeks.
  - Indiana extended the time allowed for job search from 16 weeks to 26 weeks.
  - Hawaii extended the time allowed for job search from 30 days to six months.

- Three states extended time allowed for job search from three months or 13 weeks to the end of the family's eligibility period (Connecticut, Georgia, and Kansas).
- Massachusetts extended the time allowed for job search from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for parents initially applying or recertifying their eligibility for child care assistance and to the end of the eligibility period for families already receiving assistance.
- Tennessee extended the time allowed for job search from until the end of the family's eligibility period to 90 days after the end of the eligibility period.
- Maine extended the time allowed for job search from 12 weeks to until at least July 3, 2020.
- Wisconsin extended the time allowed for job search from three months to until at least September 30, 2020.
- Three states permitted the time allowed for job search to be extended beyond three months (New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Texas).
- Utah permitted the time allowed for job search to be extended to beyond the end of the family's eligibility period.
- Nine states began allowing parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job (Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, and Virginia).

Most states adopted changes in their eligibility policies for parents searching for a job in March or April 2020, but some states adopted changes later in 2020, and one state adopted the changes in 2021.

- Nine states implemented their policy changes in March 2020 (Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin).
- Two states implemented their policy changes in April 2020 (Indiana and Rhode Island).
- Four states implemented their policy changes in May 2020 (Colorado, Florida, Missouri, and Oklahoma).
- Two states implemented their policy changes in June 2020 (Alabama and North Dakota).
- Massachusetts implemented its policy changes in July 2020.
- Virginia implemented its policy changes in March 2021.
- Four states did not report when they implemented their policy changes (Louisiana, Maine, New Hampshire, and New Mexico).

Many states that expanded eligibility for child care assistance for parents searching for a job reverted to their previous policies in mid- or late 2020. But some states planned to continue allowing more flexibility in this policy area until 2021 or beyond.

- Six states kept their expanded job search eligibility policies in effect until July, August, or September 2020 (Arizona, Colorado, Maine, New Hampshire, Utah, and Wisconsin).
- Florida states kept its expanded job search eligibility policy in effect until December 2020.
- Five states kept or planned to keep their expanded job search eligibility policies in effect until 2021 (Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Virginia).
- Oklahoma planned to keep its expanded job search eligibility policy in effect until 2022.
- Three states ended their expanded job search eligibility policies in 2020, but then resumed these expanded eligibility policies or made other changes in their job search eligibility policies in 2021:
  - Missouri allowed parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job until December 2020, then resumed allowing parents to qualify for

child care assistance while searching for a job in June 2021, and plans to continue allowing it until September 2022.

- North Dakota allowed parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job until August 2020, then resumed this policy in March 2021, and plans to keep it in effect until September 2022.
- Texas permitted an extension of the time parents already receiving child care assistance could continue receiving it while searching for a job until November 2020, and then began allowing families to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job in July 2021—a policy expected to remain in effect until September 2022.
- Indiana is extending the time parents already receiving child care assistance can continue receiving it while searching for a job until the end of the public health emergency, and also began allowing families to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job in June 2021—a policy expected to remain in effect until July 2022.
- Two states planned to keep their expanded job search eligibility policies in effect until the end of the public health emergency (Hawaii and Kansas).
- Alabama planned to keep its expanded job search eligibility policy in effect until 30 days after the end of the public health emergency.
- Three states did not report or had not determined how long their expanded job search eligibility policies would remain in effect (Georgia, Louisiana, and New Mexico).

A few states that did not make specific changes to their policies on eligibility for child care assistance during a parent's job search implemented other temporary changes that made it easier for parents with a change in their job status to continue receiving child care assistance. For example, Maryland, Michigan, Nevada, and Ohio automatically extended all families' certifications for child care assistance, regardless of job status; Washington allowed recertification for families whose participation in their previously approved activity was decreased due to COVID, provided they were otherwise eligible; and Arkansas waived reporting requirements.

# PAYMENT RATES FOR PROVIDERS SERVING FAMILIES RECEIVING CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

Even prior to the pandemic, child care programs struggled to maintain financial viability, the child care workforce—which is predominantly women and disproportionately women of color—was inadequately compensated, and provider payment rates in most states were far too low.

During the pandemic, child care providers' finances were further strained by stricter health and safety standards and the need to purchase personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies, which increased providers' costs, and by restrictions on enrollment to allow for social distancing and fewer parents bringing their children to child care out of safety concerns, which reduced providers' income.

**Approximately two-fifths of the states tried to help make up this gap with higher payment rates for at least some providers serving families receiving child care assistance** (see Table 4). In some cases, these rate increases applied to providers across the board and in other cases the rate increases applied to certain types of care or certain circumstances.

- Nine states increased payment rates for all providers serving families receiving child care assistance.<sup>6</sup>
  - The District of Columbia increased its payment rates by 41.8 percent.
  - Georgia paid providers their full published rates, even if above the state's usual maximum rates.
  - Hawaii increased its payment rates; for example, payment rates for center care for a four-year-old increased from \$740 to \$1,200 per month and payment rates for center care for a one-year-old increased from \$1,490 to \$2,000 per month.
  - Indiana increased its payment rates by 20 percent.
  - Mississippi increased its payment rates by 25 percent.
  - New Mexico paid an additional \$250 per month to providers.
  - Oklahoma paid an additional \$5 per day to providers.
  - Rhode Island increased payment rates to the 90th percentile of market rates for centers with five-star ratings (the highest level of the state's quality rating and improvement system), to the previous five-star rate for all other centers, and to the highest quality tiered rate for family child care providers.
  - Utah increased payment rates for all providers to the 80th percentile of 2017 market rates (from the 75th percentile for infant/toddler care and the 60th percentile for care for all other age groups).
- Texas increased its payment rates by 25 percent for open providers.
- Eight states paid higher rates for providers caring for children of essential workers.
  - Alabama increased its payment rates by 25 percent for care for children of first responders and health care workers.
  - Arizona paid at the 75th percentile of market rates for care for children of essential workers; in comparison, standard rates are set at the 25th percentile of market rates.
  - Illinois increased its payment rates by 30 percent for care for children of essential workers.<sup>7</sup>
  - North Carolina paid \$200 per month above the 75th percentile of 2018 statewide market rates for care provided through its emergency subsidy program for essential workers; in comparison, standard rates are set at the 100th percentile of 2015 county market rates for care for children birth through age five and the 75th percentile of 2015 county market rates for school-age care.

- Ohio and West Virginia paid at the highest quality rate tier for all providers remaining open to serve children of essential workers.
- Kentucky and New Jersey also paid higher rates for care for children of essential workers.
- Three states increased payment rates for certain types of care.
  - Louisiana increased rates for family child care and in-home care to equal rates for center care.
  - Montana increased rates for school-age care to equal rates for preschool-age care.
  - Virginia increased payment rates for license-exempt providers.

Most of these states started paying these higher rates in March or April 2020, but a few states began doing so later in the year, and two states implemented the rate increases in 2021.

- Three states implemented their payment rate increases in March 2020 (Louisiana, New Mexico, and Ohio).
- Eight states implemented their payment rate increases in April 2020 (Alabama, Arizona, Illinois, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Texas).
- Rhode Island implemented its payment rate increase in June 2020.
- Two states implemented their payment rate increases in July 2020 (Hawaii and Virginia).
- Montana implemented its payment rate increase in August 2020.
- Utah implemented its payment rate increase in September 2020.
- The District of Columbia implemented its payment rate increase in December 2020.
- Indiana implemented its payment rate increase in April 2021.
- Georgia implemented its payment rate increase in May 2021.
- Two states did not report when they implemented their payment rate increases (Kentucky and West Virginia).

Some states only kept their higher payment rates in place until mid-2020, but some states continued to pay the higher rates until 2021 or plan to maintain them until 2022 or later.

- Two states paid higher rates until May 2020 (North Carolina and Ohio).
- Illinois paid higher rates until June 2020.
- New Jersey paid higher rates until July 2020.
- Two states paid higher rates until December 2020 (Alabama and Hawaii).
- New Mexico paid \$250 above the base rate until April 2020, and then paid \$200 above the base rate from September to December 2020.
- Louisiana paid higher rates until March 2021.
- Montana paid higher rates until June 2021.
- Texas paid higher rates until August 2021.<sup>8</sup>
- The District of Columbia paid higher rates until September 2021.
- Arizona paid higher rates until August 2020, and then did so again from December 2020 through September 2021.
- Two states planned to pay higher rates until December 2021 (Mississippi and Rhode Island).
- Four states planned to pay higher rates until 2022 (Georgia, Indiana, Oklahoma, and Virginia).
- Utah maintained its higher rates through September 2021, and then implemented an additional rate increase in October 2021 that is expected to remain in effect.
- Two states did not report how long their payment rate increases were in effect (Kentucky and West Virginia).

Several additional states—including Delaware, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, and Minnesota—that did not make temporary changes to their payment rates in direct response to the pandemic reported that they did permanently increase their rates during 2020 or 2021. While these states' rate increases may not have been directly related to the pandemic, the pandemic may have influenced at least some of these states' decisions by highlighting the value of child care providers.

# PAYMENT TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS FOR CHILDREN'S ABSENT DAYS

States generally limit number of days for which they will pay child care providers while children receiving child care assistance are absent from care.

Such payment policies differ from providers' typical policies for families paying out of their own pocket for care; these private-paying families usually pay their full fee regardless of their children's attendance. When states limit the number of absent days for which they will pay providers, providers may be discouraged from serving children who receive child care assistance and providers who do serve these children may be deprived of crucial income.

With the pandemic resulting in periodic closures of child care programs and less stable attendance when programs were open, most states temporarily revised their policies on paying providers during children's absent days to make the policies more generous and flexible.

**Approximately two-thirds of the states paid child care providers based on enrollment rather than children's attendance during the pandemic** (see Table 5). A number of additional states implemented other changes to their absent day payment policies during the pandemic to make their policies more responsive to families and providers. In most cases, states adopted these policies only temporarily, but some states have extended these policies or considered making them permanent, recognizing the importance of ensuring stable income for child care providers and accommodating the needs of children who may have regular absences as a result of health issues or family circumstances.

- Thirty-four states paid based on enrollment or authorization or paid for all absent days, rather than paying based on attendance or paying for only a limited number of absent days (Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia,<sup>9</sup> Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts,<sup>10</sup>

Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee,<sup>11</sup> Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming).<sup>12</sup>

- Six states increased the number of days for which they would pay providers while children were absent (Delaware, District of Columbia, Indiana, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Virginia).<sup>13</sup>
- Alaska paid for the full month if children attended at least one day in the month.
- Three states paid for all absent days related to COVID (Nebraska, South Carolina, and South Dakota).
- Minnesota made it much easier to receive medical exemptions from limits from absent days.<sup>14</sup>
- Missouri allowed providers to request payment when children were absent due to the pandemic.
- Colorado encouraged counties to pay for at least 14 absences per month or based on enrollment, regardless of operating status.
- New York allowed localities to pay for additional absent days beyond the usual limit if a provider was open and a child was not in attendance due to the effects of COVID.
- Arizona paid based on enrollment for children of essential workers receiving Enrichment Centers Child Care Scholarships.
- New Hampshire permanently increased the amount of time for which it would pay a provider while a child was absent from care, but this change was not in response to the pandemic.

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Most states made their changes in absent day payment policies in spring 2020, but a few states implemented changes at later stages of the pandemic.

- Thirty-two states implemented changes in their absent day payment policies starting in March 2020 (Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming).
- Ten states implemented changes in their absent day payment policies starting in April 2020 (Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oregon, and Rhode Island).
- Massachusetts implemented changes in its absent day payment policy in July 2020.<sup>15</sup>
- Missouri implemented changes in its absent day payment policy starting in August 2020.
- Two states implemented changes in their absent day payment policies starting in November 2020 (Alaska and District of Columbia).
- Oklahoma implemented changes in its absent day payment policy starting in February 2021.
- Nevada implemented changes in its absent day payment policy in March 2021.<sup>16</sup>

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Many states kept their more generous absent day policies in place only until mid- or late 2020, but some states continued these policies into 2021 or resumed their more generous policies or adopted other changes in their absent day policies later in 2020 or in 2021. In some cases, states adopted permanent changes in their absent day policies; while these new policies were not always as generous as policies initially implemented during the beginning of the pandemic—when many states paid based on enrollment—the policies are more flexible than those in place prior to the pandemic.

- North Carolina kept the changes in its absent day policy in effect until the end of March 2020.
- Nine states kept the changes in their absent day policies in effect until May, June, or July 2020 (Arkansas, Connecticut, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Vermont,<sup>17</sup> and Wisconsin).
- Five states kept the changes in their absent day policies in effect until August, September, or October 2020 (Arizona, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Washington, and West Virginia).
- Two states kept the changes in their absent day policies in effect until December 2020 (Florida and Tennessee).<sup>18</sup>
- Louisiana kept the changes in its absent day policy in effect until January 2021.
- Texas kept the changes in its absent day policy in effect until April 2021.
- Four states kept the changes in their absent day policies in effect until June or July 2021 (California, Minnesota, Nevada, and New York).
- Four states kept the changes in their absent day policies in effect until August or September 2021 (Delaware, Iowa, Missouri, and South Dakota).
- Massachusetts planned to keep the changes in its absent day policy in effect through summer 2021 or later.
- Two states planned to keep the changes in their absent day policies in effect until the end of 2021 (Mississippi and Rhode Island).
- Hawaii planned to keep the changes in its absent day policy in effect until the end of the public health emergency.
- Oregon planned to keep the changes in its absent day policy in effect until 90 days after the end of the public health emergency.
- Nebraska planned to pay for all absent days related to COVID until 30 days after the end of the public health emergency; the state, which previously did not pay for any absent days, also permanently changed its policy as of September 2020 to pay for up to five absent days per month.

- Nine states kept the changes in their absent day policies in effect until mid- or late 2020, and then later resumed or started implementing these or other changes in their absent day policies that remained or will remain in effect until 2021 or later (Alaska, Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Utah, Virginia, and Wyoming). For example:
  - Illinois paid based on enrollment until June 2020, and then as of July 2021, began allowing providers to receive full payment if a child was absent for up to 30 percent of their eligible days—up from 20 percent of their eligible days prior to the pandemic.
  - Montana paid the full authorized amount, regardless of attendance, until the end of May 2020, and then paid providers for up to 10 days per month while a child was absent, an increase from 2 days per month prior to the pandemic, from August 1, 2020, until May 31, 2021.
  - Utah paid based on enrollment until September 2020, and then began paying based on enrollment again as of June 2021 and expected to continue doing so through June 2023.
- Six states had not yet determined how long the changes in their absent day policies would remain in effect (District of Columbia, Georgia,<sup>19</sup> Kansas, New Jersey, Ohio, and Oklahoma).



# PAYMENT FOR SCHOOL-AGE CARE

School-age care programs serving children receiving child care assistance often receive part-day payment that only covers care during the before- and after-school hours. But during the pandemic, when many schools did not have full-time in-person classes, many school-age children were in full-day school-age programs while they were attending school remotely for part or all of the week or while schools were closed.

**Most states adapted their child care assistance policies to these circumstances and adopted policies that offered full-time payment when children were attending school-age programs full time during school closure or virtual schooling, or policies that offered extra support for school-age programs in other ways** (see Table 6).<sup>20</sup>

- Ten states automatically provided full-time payment for school-age care (Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Washington).
- Thirty-two states allowed for payment to cover school-age care provided while a child was attending school remotely or to cover full-time care while a child was not in school (California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin).<sup>21</sup>
- Utah paid a full-time rate rather than a part-time rate when school was temporarily closed for up to 14 days.
- Montana changed the payment rate for school-age care to equal the rate for preschool-age care.

Some states implemented changes in their school-age care payment policies in spring 2020, at the start of the pandemic as schools closed, and other states implemented the changes in fall 2020, at the beginning of the new school year.

- Eleven states implemented changes in their school-age care payment policies in March 2020 (Arkansas, California, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, South Carolina, South Dakota, Virginia, and Washington).
- Five states implemented changes in their school-age care payment policies in April 2020 (Indiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Rhode Island).
- Two states implemented changes in their school-age care payment policies in July 2020 (Delaware and Illinois).
- Twelve states implemented changes in their school-age care payment policies in August 2020 (Colorado, Hawaii, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin).
- Five states implemented changes in their school-age care payment policies in September 2020 (Kansas, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Oregon, and Vermont).
- Utah implemented changes in its school-age care payment policy in October 2020.
- District of Columbia implemented changes in its school-age care payment policy in November 2020.

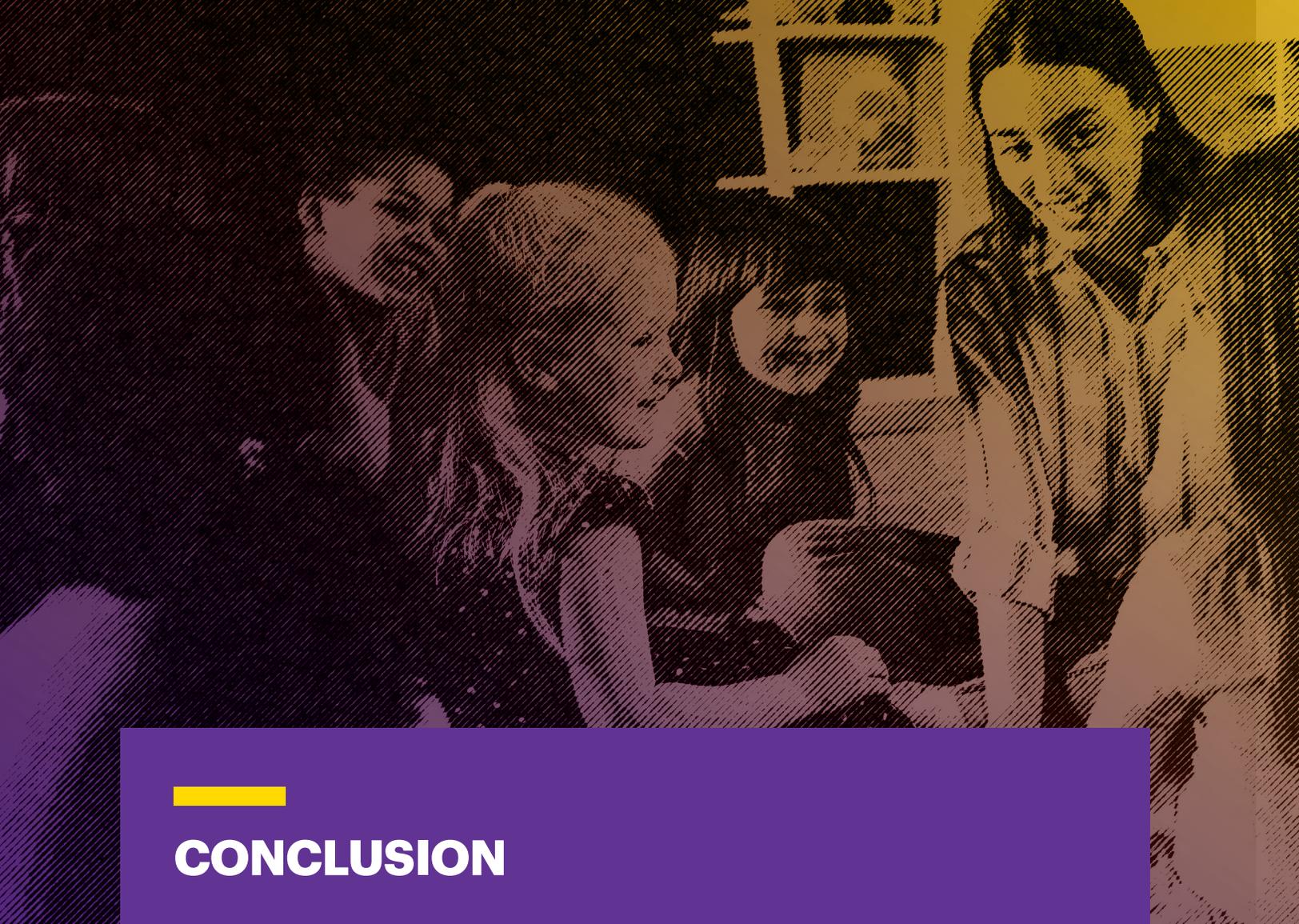
- Three states implemented changes in their school-age care payment policies at the start of the 2020–21 school year (Connecticut, Florida, and Minnesota).
- Four states did not report when they implemented changes in their school-age care payment policies (Kentucky, Maine, Missouri, and Nebraska).

States varied widely in how long their changes in school-age payment policies were or were expected to be in effect.

- Arkansas kept the changes in its school-age care payment policy in effect until May 2020.
- Mississippi kept the changes in its school-age care payment policy in effect until August 2020.
- Kansas kept the changes in its school-age care payment policy in effect until September 2020.
- Two states kept the changes in their school-age care payment policies in effect until December 2020 (Missouri and South Dakota).
- Two states kept the changes in their school-age care payment policies in effect until January 2021 (Hawaii and Louisiana).
- Fifteen states kept the changes in their school-age care payment policies in effect until June or July 2021 or the end of the 2020–21 school year (California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts,<sup>22</sup> Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, Virginia,<sup>23</sup> and Wisconsin).
- Iowa kept the changes in its school-age care payment policy in effect until August 2021.
- Tennessee kept the changes in its school-age care payment policy in effect until September 2021.
- Washington automatically provided full-time payment for all school-age care until August 31, 2020, and then allowed full-time payment based on a family’s need and eligibility from September 2020 through June 2021.
- South Carolina provided full-time payment for school-age care until August 30, 2020, and then started providing

payment during remote learning as of August 31, 2020; the state did not indicate how long this policy would remain in effect.

- Georgia provided full-time payment for school-age care until September 12, 2020, and then started providing payment during remote learning as of September 13, 2020; the state did not indicate how long this policy would remain in effect.
- Oklahoma planned to keep the changes in its school-age care payment policy in effect until May 2022.
- Two states made or planned to make the changes in their school-age care payment policies permanent (New York and Ohio).
- Ten states still had the changes in their school-age care payment policies in effect and had not yet determined how long the changes would remain in effect at the time the information was reported (Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Kentucky, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, and Texas).
- Four states did not report how long the changes in their school-age care payment policies were in effect (Maine, Nebraska, Nevada, and New Hampshire).



## CONCLUSION

States responded to families' and child care providers' needs during the pandemic emergency by adopting more generous child care assistance policies. Many states increased or waived income eligibility limits, reduced or waived families' copayments, expanded eligibility for parents searching for a job, paid for more absent days or all absent days, raised provider payment rates, and/or covered more hours of school-age care.

These policy changes helped enable both families and providers to have greater financial stability and greater flexibility as they grappled with the major disruptions and challenges of the pandemic.

In many cases, these policy changes were only in place for a limited time—sometimes for only a few months. But a number of states have kept their policies in place for over a year or expect to continue them for several years

or more. Given the benefits for children, families, and child care providers, all states should adopt these more generous and more responsive policies permanently, and additional federal and state funding should be provided to support the policies' ongoing implementation as part of building a stronger child care system.

## ENDNOTES

- 1** CCDBG is supported by discretionary funding, which is generally appropriated each year and does not require a state match, and mandatory funding, which is a permanent annual appropriation and generally requires a state match.
- 2** Although federal child care mandatory funding typically requires a state match, states are not required to match the additional federal child care mandatory funding provided under ARPA for grant years 2021 or 2022.
- 3** Arizona's increased income limit applied to those essential workers served by enrichment centers.
- 4** North Carolina's increased income limit only applied to those essential workers participating in the state's Emergency Child Care Subsidy program.
- 5** Arizona made child care assistance available to essential workers with incomes up to a limit above the standard eligibility limit for child care assistance through Enrichment Centers Child Care Scholarships from April 2020 through August 2020, and through Essential Workers Child Care Relief Scholarships from December 2020 through September 2021.
- 6** Several additional states, including Delaware, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, and Minnesota, reported that they increased or updated their payment rates, but noted that these changes were not in direct response to the pandemic.
- 7** In addition to temporarily increasing payment rates for care for children of essential workers, Illinois also increased payment rates for family child care providers by 3.5 percent as of July 1, 2021, but this change was not directly related to the pandemic.
- 8** Texas started phasing out its rate enhancement in March 2021, and fully discontinued it in August 2021.
- 9** Georgia paid based on enrollment if the child had attended at least once since March 1, 2020.
- 10** While Massachusetts removed its limit on the total number of absent days, it retained its pre-pandemic limit of three consecutive unexplained absences twice during a family's 12-month authorization.
- 11** While Tennessee removed its limit on absent days, the state still reached out to families after an absence of 20 consecutive days to check if the child was returning to care or if payment should be stopped.
- 12** A few of these states—including Kansas, New Mexico, Texas, and Wisconsin—paid based on enrollment prior to the pandemic. These states continued to pay based on enrollment during the pandemic, and in some cases, removed other limitations. For example, prior to the pandemic, Texas discontinued child care assistance after 40 total unexplained absences; the state removed this absent day limit during the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, Wisconsin required parents receiving child care assistance to report if their child had not attended child care for 20 consecutive calendar days and child care providers to report when a child receiving child care assistance had not attended for 30 calendar days; these reporting requirements were suspended during the public health emergency.
- 13** In addition to these six states, a few of the states listed in the previous bullet—including Florida, Illinois, Michigan, and Montana—temporarily paid based on enrollment during an initial period and then, relative to their pre-pandemic policies, either temporarily or permanently increased the amount of time for which they would pay providers while children were absent.
- 14** Prior to the pandemic, Minnesota allowed providers to be paid for additional absent days beyond the usual limit if the child, the child's parent, or the child's sibling living in the same home had a documented medical condition. From March 13, 2020, to June 27, 2021, the state required an absent day exemption to be granted if requested by the family or provider, and allowed more flexibility in how and when the medical exemption could be requested; the family or provider could request the exemption verbally or in writing or a medical professional or the family's provider could complete a form, and requests could be made for children who were not ill but chose to stay home as a precaution.
- 15** Massachusetts began paying based on enrollment as of July 2020. Prior to that, as of March 2020, the state had expanded its health exemption—which, pre-pandemic, allowed children with health conditions to be authorized for unlimited absences—to all families who had COVID concerns.

**16** Nevada paid all licensed child care providers and privately owned school-age providers based on enrollment from March 1, 2021, through July 1, 2021. In addition, the state paid any licensed provider closed by any government agency due to COVID based on the previous month's enrollment from March 30, 2020, to June 30, 2020. The state also did not subject families' child care assistance to termination based on absent days from March 30, 2020, to June 30, 2020, as well as from March 1, 2021, through July 1, 2021.

**17** Vermont paid based on scheduled rather than actual attendance from March 16, 2020, to May 30, 2020, and then allowed families whose children who had a health condition or other COVID-related concern to receive approval for additional absent days beyond the standard limit from May 31, 2020, to July 4, 2020.

**18** Florida paid based on enrollment from March to September 2020, then paid providers for up to 16 absent days in October, 14 absent days in November, and 12 absent days in December, before resuming its pre-pandemic policy (of paying for up to 3 absent days per month and up to 7 additional absent days in extraordinary circumstances) in January 2021. Tennessee continued payment to providers that were closed due to the impacts of COVID until June 30, 2020, and continued payment to providers in circumstances where the provider was open but the child was not attending until December 31, 2020.

**19** Georgia paid based on enrollment regardless of the provider's operating status from March 16, 2020, through October 25, 2020; as of October 26, 2020, the state continued to pay based on enrollment, but providers had to be open for care or in an approved temporarily closed status to receive payment.

**20** Alaska, West Virginia, and Wyoming are not included in the lists of states below because they did not make changes specific to their school-age payment policies. However, these states temporarily changed their policies for paying providers, including school-age care providers, during absent days.

**21** A few of these states, including Michigan, North Dakota, and Texas, specified that full-time payment was only provided for school-age care during remote learning if in-person school was not an option.

**22** Massachusetts provides full-time payment for all school-age children during the summer and, at the time the information was reported, was evaluating its payment policies for school-age care for fall 2021.

**23** For the 2021–22 school year, Virginia only allows full-time care for school-age children to be approved in limited circumstances, such as when the child has a medical condition that requires the child to remain in remote learning.

# TABLE 1

## Income Eligibility Criteria for Child Care Assistance: Changes in Response to the Pandemic

	CHANGE IN INCOME LIMIT FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE DURING PANDEMIC	START DATE OF CHANGE IN INCOME LIMIT DURING PANDEMIC	END DATE OF CHANGE IN INCOME LIMIT DURING PANDEMIC
Alabama	Waived for first responders and health care workers	April 22, 2020	December 31, 2021
Alaska	No	N/A	N/A
Arizona*	Increased to \$65,000 for essential workers served by enrichment centers (compared to standard limit of 165% FPL)	April 2020	August 2020
Arkansas	Waived for essential workers	June 2020	January 2021
California*	Waived for essential workers	April 8, 2020	June 30, 2020
Colorado	No	N/A	N/A
Connecticut	Increased to 60% SMI (compared to standard limit of 50% FPL)	July 2021	While funds available
Delaware	No	N/A	N/A
District of Columbia	No	N/A	N/A
Florida	No	N/A	N/A
Georgia*	No	N/A	N/A
Hawaii*	Waived for families impacted by the public health emergency	March 20, 2020	End of emergency
Idaho*	Increased to 145% FPL (compared to standard limit of 130% FPL)	March 1, 2021	March 1, 2022
Illinois	Waived for essential workers	March 2020	June 2020
Indiana	No	N/A	N/A
Iowa	No	N/A	N/A
Kansas*	Increased to 250% FPL for essential workers (compared to standard limit of 185% FPL)	April 20, 2020	End of emergency
Kentucky	No	N/A	N/A
Louisiana	Waived for essential workers	March 23, 2020	June 30, 2020
Maine	Waived for essential workers	April 2020	July 3, 2020
Maryland	Waived for essential workers	March 30, 2020	July 20, 2020
Massachusetts*	No	N/A	N/A
Michigan	No	N/A	N/A
Minnesota	No	N/A	N/A
Mississippi*	Waived for essential workers	April 2020	November 2020
Missouri*	No	N/A	N/A
Montana	No	N/A	N/A
Nebraska	No	N/A	N/A
Nevada*	No	N/A	N/A
New Hampshire	No	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	Waived for essential workers	April 2020	July 3, 2020
New Mexico	Waived for essential workers	March 2020	June 2020
New York	Localities could increase to 85% SMI (compared to standard limit of 200% FPL)	March 16, 2020	June 2021
North Carolina*	Increased to 300% FPL for certain essential workers (compared to standard limit of 200% FPL)	April 2020	May 31, 2020
North Dakota	No	N/A	N/A
Ohio	No	N/A	N/A
Oklahoma*	Waived for essential workers needing in-home care and job seekers	May 1, 2020	May 31, 2022
Oregon	Increased to 250% FPL (compared to standard limit of 185% FPL)	March 16, 2020	End of emergency
Pennsylvania	No	N/A	N/A
Rhode Island	No	N/A	N/A
South Carolina*	Waived for essential workers	Not reported	August 30, 2020
South Dakota	No	N/A	N/A
Tennessee*	Waived for essential workers	March 3, 2020	September 30, 2021
Texas*	Increased to 150% SMI for essential workers (compared to standard maximum limit of 85% SMI)	March 24, 2020	May 20, 2020
Utah	Increased to 85% SMI (compared to standard limit of 60% SMI)	March 18, 2020	To be determined
Vermont	No	N/A	N/A
Virginia*	Increased to 85% SMI for families with young children (compared to standard regional limits of 150%-250% FPL)	March 18, 2021	December 31, 2021
Washington	No	N/A	N/A
West Virginia	Waived for essential workers	March 1, 2020	While funds available
Wisconsin	No	N/A	N/A
Wyoming*	No	N/A	N/A

## NOTES FOR TABLE 1.

# INCOME ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE: CHANGES IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

**ARIZONA:** The state's standard income limit to qualify for child care assistance is 165 percent of poverty (\$35,844 a year for a family of three in 2020). Arizona Enrichment Centers Child Care Scholarships were available to essential workers with annual incomes of \$65,000 or less from April 2020 through August 2020. In addition, Essential Workers Child Care Relief Scholarships were available to essential workers with annual incomes of \$65,000 or less from December 2020 through September 2021. Child Care for Returning Workers was available to essential workers who earned \$25 per hour or less and who received unemployment benefits for the week ending May 8, 2021, or May 15, 2021; intake for the program ran from June 1, 2021, through September 6, 2021.

**CALIFORNIA:** While the state temporarily waived the income limit for child care assistance for essential workers, families who met the income criteria were still prioritized over those who did not.

**GEORGIA:** The state had not changed its income limit in response to the pandemic, but it was considering using new federal child care funding to increase the income limit for child care assistance.

**HAWAII:** The policy allowing the income limit for child care assistance to be waived was reported to be in effect through the duration of state-declared emergency period, not to exceed one year initially.

**IDAHO:** The higher income limit for child care assistance will stay in place until March 1, 2022, and may be continued beyond that date.

**KANSAS:** Essential workers include health care workers, first responders, food and agriculture workers, judicial branch workers, national guard, frontline child and adult protection specialists, child care providers, and (effective September 1, 2020) educators and other school workers. The policy was expected to be in effect for the duration of the declared emergency or until discontinued by the state agency.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** While the state did not change its income limit for child care assistance, it did exclude the extra weekly pandemic unemployment benefits as well as any COVID-related hazard pay, bonus, stipends, or incentive pay in determining eligibility. The state also automatically extended all authorizations for child care assistance that had an end date of March 16, 2020, through July 31, 2020, for six months.

**MISSISSIPPI:** Essential workers could receive child care certificates effective for 90 days, with no income limit.

**MISSOURI:** While the state did not change its income limit for child care assistance, it did extend eligibility for families that were scheduled to recertify as of April 1, 2020, through June 30, 2020, families scheduled to recertify as of May 1, 2020, were extended through July 31, 2020, and families scheduled to recertify as of June 1, 2020, were extended through August 31, 2020.

**NEVADA:** While the state did not change its income limit for child care assistance, it did automatically renew any family whose 12-month redetermination was due between March 16, 2020, and June 30, 2020, for an additional 12 months.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** The income limit was increased to 300 percent of poverty only for those essential workers participating in the Emergency Child Care Subsidy program; all other families were subject to the standard income limits of 200 percent of poverty for families with children birth through age five and families with children of any age who have special needs and 133 percent of poverty for families with children ages six to 13.

**OKLAHOMA:** The income limit for child care assistance was waived for essential workers needing in-home care and job seekers who lost employment during the pandemic.

**SOUTH CAROLINA:** In addition to temporarily waiving the income limit for child care assistance for essential workers, the state's income limit to qualify for child care assistance was increased to 300 percent of poverty (\$65,880 a year for a family of three in 2021), from 55 percent of state median income (\$35,580 a year for a family of three), as of October 2020.

**TENNESSEE:** The state planned to waive the income limit for child care assistance for essential workers until September 30, 2021 (the end of the current state plan cycle), pending approval. Note, however, that a network of temporary sites to serve school-age children of essential workers was scheduled to end August 31, 2021.

**TEXAS:** Essential workers were eligible for 3 months of child care assistance upon application approval.

**VIRGINIA:** Under the state's standard policy, the state has four different income limits to qualify for child care assistance for each of four different regions of the state: 150 percent of poverty (\$32,580 a year for a family of three), 160 percent of poverty (\$34,752 a year for a family of three), 185 percent of poverty (\$40,188 a year for a family of three), and 250 percent of poverty (\$54,300 a year for a family of three). The state temporarily increased the income eligibility limit to qualify for child care assistance to 85 percent of the state median income (\$74,712 a year for a family of three) for families with young children, defined as families with at least one child who is five years of age or younger, who has not started kindergarten. Families must still meet all other non-financial eligibility requirements.

**WYOMING:** While the state did not change its income limit for child care assistance, it did extend eligibility by 3 months for families that had their renewal due in March, April, May, or June 2020.

# TABLE 2

## Copayments for Families Receiving Child Care Assistance: Changes in Response to the Pandemic

	REDUCTIONS OR WAIVERS OF COPAYMENTS DURING PANDEMIC	START DATE OF CHANGE IN COPAYMENTS DURING PANDEMIC	END DATE OF CHANGE IN COPAYMENTS DURING PANDEMIC
Alabama	Waived for all families	June 1, 2021	December 31, 2021
Alaska*	Waived for all families	November 1, 2020	November 30, 2020
Arizona*	Waived for essential workers	April 1, 2020	August 31, 2020
Arkansas	Waived for all families	April 2020	Not reported
California*	Waived for all families	April 2020	July 2020
Colorado*	Counties allowed to waive	March 18, 2020	Waiver policy made permanent
Connecticut	Waived for all families	June 2021	November 30, 2021
Delaware	Waived for all families	April 2020	August 1, 2021
District of Columbia	Waived for all families	April 2020	July 1, 2020
Florida	Waived for all families	April 2020	December 2020
Georgia	Waived for all families	May 17, 2021	October 2, 2022
Hawaii	Waived for impacted families	March 20, 2020	End of emergency
Idaho	Reduced by 50%	November 2020	November 2021 (expected)
Illinois	Reduced to \$1 per month for all families	April 2020	June 2020
Indiana	Waived for all families	April 28, 2021	March 30, 2022
Iowa*	Waived for all families	April 6, 2020	October 4, 2020
Kansas*	Waived for essential workers	April 20, 2020	End of emergency
Kentucky	Waived for all families	March 15, 2020	July 15, 2020
Louisiana	Waived for all families	March 13, 2020	January 31, 2021 (or later)
Maine*	Waived for all families	March 18, 2020	July 3, 2020
Maryland	Waived for all families	March 30, 2020	July 20, 2020
Massachusetts	Waived for all families	March 23, 2020	December 31, 2021 (or later)
Michigan	No	N/A	N/A
Minnesota	No	N/A	N/A
Mississippi	Waived for all families	April 2020	December 31, 2021
Missouri	Waived for all families	June 1, 2021	September 30, 2022
Montana	Waived for all families	March 2020	May 2020
Nebraska	No	N/A	N/A
Nevada*	Waived on case-by-case basis	March 30, 2020	June 30, 2020
New Hampshire	Fully covered, then reduced by 50%	April 6, 2020	Not reported
New Jersey	Waived upon request	March 2020	To be determined
New Mexico*	Waived for all families	March 2020	May 2020
New York	Local districts allowed to waive	March 16, 2020	July 2021
North Carolina*	Waived for all families	April 2020	August 2020
North Dakota	Waived for all families	March 2021	March 2023
Ohio*	Waived for essential workers	March 18, 2020	May 30, 2020
Oklahoma	Waived for all families	April 2020	May 31, 2022
Oregon*	Waived for all families	March 8, 2020	December 31, 2020 (or later)
Pennsylvania*	No copayments if program closed	March 16, 2020	August 31, 2020
Rhode Island*	Waived for all families	April 1, 2020	June 1, 2020
South Carolina*	Waived for essential workers	April 20, 2020	August 30, 2020
South Dakota	Waived for all families	April 1, 2021	September 30, 2021
Tennessee	Waived for all families	March 3, 2020	August 31, 2021
Texas*	Waived for all families	April 1, 2020	May 30, 2020
Utah*	Waived for all families	May 2020	June 2023
Vermont	Fully covered, then reduced by 50%	March 15, 2020	May 31, 2020
Virginia	Waived for all families	April 1, 2020	December 31, 2021
Washington*	Waived for all families	April 1, 2020	June 30, 2020
West Virginia	Waived for essential workers	March 1, 2020	Not reported
Wisconsin	No	N/A	N/A
Wyoming	No	N/A	N/A

## NOTES FOR TABLE 2.

### COPAYMENTS FOR FAMILIES RECEIVING CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE: CHANGES IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

**ALASKA:** In addition to waiving copayments during November 2020, the state waived copayments for all families during the months of January, February, June, July, August, and September 2021.

**ARIZONA:** In addition to waiving copayments for essential workers from April through August 2020, the state once again waived copayments for essential workers from December 16, 2020, through September 30, 2021.

**CALIFORNIA:** In addition to waiving copayments for all families from April to July 2020, the state waived copayments for families whose children were remote learning or sheltering-in-place from September 2020 through June 2021.

**COLORADO:** The ability for counties to waive copayments in the event of an emergency was made permanent effective April 1, 2020. Counties may waive copayments in the event of a declared state or local disaster or emergency for up to 12 months for impacted households. In addition, the state temporarily reduced copayments from August 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

**IOWA:** In addition to waiving copayments from April to October 2020, the state once again waived copayments from February 8, 2021, to June 27, 2021.

**KANSAS:** In addition to waiving copayments for essential workers during the pandemic emergency, the state has made changes to its copayment policies that are expected to remain in place after the emergency. As of July 1, 2021, the state expanded the population exempt from copayments from families with incomes below 70 percent of poverty to those with incomes below 100 percent of poverty, and reduced copayments for all other families to no more than 3 percent of income.

**MAINE:** In addition to waiving copayments from March to July 2020, the state began waiving copayments once again as of March 27, 2021, for 12 months using additional federal child care funds under CRRSA and will continue waiving copayments until September 30, 2023 using additional federal child care funds under ARPA.

**NEVADA:** In addition to waiving copayments on a case-by-case basis from March through June 2020, the state waived copayments for families who lost their jobs due to COVID, as determined by special consideration, from March 1, 2021, through July 1, 2021.

**NEW MEXICO:** In addition to waiving copayments from March to May 2020, the state once again waived copayments from September through December 2020.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** In addition to waiving copayments from April to August 2020, the state once again waived copayments from March 2021 through October 2021, and may continue to waive copayments beyond that date.

**OHIO:** From March 18, 2020, to May 30, 2020, families of essential workers were prioritized for care in temporary pandemic child care programs; programs were not permitted to collect copayments or any other payment from parents receiving assistance for any care provided. When child care programs reopened on May 31, 2020, all assigned copayments were again collected.

**OREGON:** The state was considering an extension of the copayment waiver.

**PENNSYLVANIA:** Under the state's temporary policy, providers were directed not to collect copayments from families if the child care facility was closed or if the child care facility was open but a child was not attending.

**RHODE ISLAND:** In addition to waiving copayments from April to June 2020, the state began waiving copayments again as of February 21, 2021, and planned to continue doing so until December 21, 2021.

**SOUTH CAROLINA:** In addition to temporarily waiving copayments for essential workers, as of October 19, 2020, the state made assistance for up to 52 weeks of care available to working families with incomes up to 300 percent of poverty, with no copayment required.

**TEXAS:** Copayments were waived for all families during April and May 2020, but for most of this period, providers were only able to accept children of essential workers. Copayments were also waived for families receiving COVID Essential Worker Care for their 3-month eligibility period. Under a program starting as of August 1, 2021, service industry workers with incomes at or below 75 percent of state median income have no copayment. Copayments are also waived for parents served by the Texas Rising Star Contracted Slots Pilot program, which was authorized on June 29, 2021. In addition, copayments will be waived for 3 months for parents who initially qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.

**UTAH:** The state's copayment waiver remains in effect and it is anticipated it will be funded through June 2023 with emergency relief funding.

**WASHINGTON:** In addition to waiving copayments from April through June 2020, the state once again waived copayments from October through December 2020, and then capped copayments at no more than \$115 per month from January through June 2021.

# TABLE 3

## Eligibility for Child Care Assistance While a Parent Searches for a Job: Changes in Response to the Pandemic

	CHANGES IN POLICY ON ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE WHILE A PARENT SEARCHES FOR A JOB	START DATE OF CHANGE IN JOB SEARCH POLICY DURING PANDEMIC	END DATE OF CHANGE IN JOB SEARCH POLICY DURING PANDEMIC
Alabama	Extended time allowed for job search to 6 months (from 3 months)	June 1, 2020	30 days after end of emergency
Alaska	No	N/A	N/A
Arizona	Extended time allowed for job search to 6 months (from 3 months)	March 31, 2020	August 31, 2020
Arkansas*	No	N/A	N/A
California	No	N/A	N/A
Colorado	Extended time allowed for job search to 24 weeks (from 13 weeks)	May 1, 2020	August 31, 2020
Connecticut	Extended time allowed for job search to end of eligibility period (from 3 months)	March 1, 2020	May 30, 2021
Delaware	No	N/A	N/A
District of Columbia	No	N/A	N/A
Florida	Allowed job search at initial qualification	May 2020	December 2020
Georgia*	Extended time allowed for job search to end of eligibility period (from 13 weeks)	March 16, 2020	To be determined
Hawaii	Extended time allowed for job search to 6 months (from 30 days)	March 20, 2020	End of emergency
Idaho	No	N/A	N/A
Illinois	No	N/A	N/A
Indiana*	Extended time allowed for job search to 26 weeks (from 16 weeks)	April 2020	End of emergency
Iowa	No	N/A	N/A
Kansas	Extended time allowed for job search to end of eligibility period (from 3 months)	March 16, 2020	End of emergency
Kentucky	No	N/A	N/A
Louisiana	Allowed job search at initial qualification, for up to 90 days	Not reported	Not reported
Maine	Extended time allowed for job search until July 3, 2020 (from 12 weeks)	Not reported	July 3, 2020
Maryland*	No	N/A	N/A
Massachusetts*	Extended time allowed for job search to 26 weeks (from 12 weeks)	July 3, 2020	Through summer 2021 (or later)
Michigan*	No	N/A	N/A
Minnesota	No	N/A	N/A
Mississippi	No	N/A	N/A
Missouri*	Allowed job search at initial qualification, for up to 90 days	May 1, 2020	December 31, 2020
Montana	No	N/A	N/A
Nebraska	No	N/A	N/A
Nevada*	No	N/A	N/A
New Hampshire	Permitted extension of time allowed for job search (beyond usual 92 days)	Not reported	August 2020
New Jersey*	No	N/A	N/A
New Mexico	Allowed job search at initial qualification, for up to 3 months	Not reported	Not reported
New York	No	N/A	N/A
North Carolina*	No	N/A	N/A
North Dakota*	Allowed job search at initial qualification, for up to 3 months	June 2020	August 2020
Ohio*	No	N/A	N/A
Oklahoma	Allowed job search at initial qualification, for up to 60 days	May 1, 2020	May 31, 2022
Oregon	No	N/A	N/A
Pennsylvania	No	N/A	N/A
Rhode Island	Permitted extension of time allowed for job search (beyond usual 3 months)	April 1, 2020	September 21, 2021
South Carolina	No	N/A	N/A
South Dakota	No	N/A	N/A
Tennessee*	Extended time allowed for job search to 90 days after end of eligibility period	March 3, 2020	August 31, 2021
Texas*	Permitted extension of time allowed for job search (beyond usual 3 months)	March 24, 2020	November 1, 2020
Utah*	Permitted extension of time allowed for job search to beyond end of eligibility period	March 2020	September 30, 2020
Vermont	No	N/A	N/A
Virginia*	Allowed job search at initial eligibility and at redetermination with no time limit	March 18, 2021	December 31, 2021
Washington*	No	N/A	N/A
West Virginia	No	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin*	Extended time allowed for job search (beyond usual 3 months)	March 2020	September 2020
Wyoming	No	N/A	N/A

## NOTES FOR TABLE 3.

# ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE WHILE A PARENT SEARCHES FOR A JOB: CHANGES IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

**ARKANSAS:** The state did not change its policies on eligibility for child care assistance while a parent searched for a job, but it did waive reporting requirements.

**GEORGIA:** In addition to extending the time allowed for job search until the end of the family's eligibility period, the state allowed families to maintain eligibility for child care assistance at redetermination if the job loss or reduced work hours was due to circumstances related to COVID.

**INDIANA:** In addition to temporarily extending the time a family already receiving child care assistance could continue receiving assistance while a parent searches for a job, the state is allowing families to initially qualify for assistance while a parent searches for a job from June 26, 2021, to July 2, 2022.

**MARYLAND:** The state did not make specific changes to its policies on child care assistance for families while a parent searches for a job, but it did automatically extend all families' certifications for child care assistance by 52 weeks, regardless of job status.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** A family can receive child care assistance while a parent searches for a job for up to 26 weeks at redetermination and initial application; families already receiving assistance can continue to receive it while a parent searches for a job until the end of their 12-month eligibility period.

**MICHIGAN:** The state did not make specific changes to its policies on child care assistance for families while a parent searches for a job, but it did allow all families with recertifications scheduled for March, April, June, or July 2020 to have their eligibility extended by 6 months, regardless of job status.

**MISSOURI:** In addition to allowing families to initially qualify for child care assistance while a parent searched for a job from May through December 2020, the state is allowing job search at initial qualification, for up to 60 days, for families unemployed due to the pandemic, from June 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022.

**NEVADA:** The state did not make specific changes to its policies on child care assistance for families while a parent searches for a job, but it did automatically recertify all families due for recertification between March 16, 2020, and June 30, 2020, for an additional 12 months, regardless of job status, and with no documentation required.

**NEW JERSEY:** The state did not make specific changes to its policies on child care assistance for families while a parent searches for a job, but it did allow families who lost their job to request for their copayment to be waived.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** The state did not make specific changes to its policies on child care assistance for families while a parent searches for a job, but it did continue to permit an extension of time allowed for job search (beyond the usual 90 days), as was allowed prior to the pandemic.

**NORTH DAKOTA:** After allowing families to initially qualify for child care assistance while a parent searched for a job from June to August 2020, the state resumed this policy in March 2021, and planned to keep it in effect until September 2022.

**OHIO:** The state did not make specific changes to its policies on child care assistance for families while a parent searches for a job, but it did instruct county agencies not to take any negative actions on existing cases for any changes reported from the end of March 2020 through July 31, 2020, and families due for recertification from March through July 2020 received automatic extensions of 6 months.

**TENNESSEE:** Prior to the pandemic, families could continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job until the end of their 12-month eligibility period.

**TEXAS:** In addition to permitting an extension of the time a family already receiving child care assistance could continue receiving it while a parent searched for a job from March to November 2020, the state is allowing job search at initial qualification, for up to 3 months, from July 1, 2021, through September 2022.

**UTAH:** Prior to the pandemic, families could continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job until the end of their 12-month eligibility period.

**VIRGINIA:** Participation in job search is verified through verbal attestation.

**WASHINGTON:** The state did not make specific changes to its policies on child care assistance for families while a parent searches for a job, but it did allow all families due for recertification from March through June 2020 to continue their eligibility for 12 months when their participation in their previously approved activity was decreased due to COVID and they were otherwise eligible.

**WISCONSIN:** For parents who lost their job or had to take a temporary break from their approved activity during the public health emergency, the standard 3-month period allowed for a family to continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job did not start until July 1, 2020, so these parents could continue receiving assistance through September 30, 2020.

# TABLE 4

## Child Care Provider Payment Rates: Changes in Response to the Pandemic

	CHANGES IN PAYMENT RATES FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS SERVING FAMILIES RECEIVING CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE DURING PANDEMIC	START DATE OF CHANGE IN PAYMENT RATES DURING PANDEMIC	END DATE OF CHANGE IN PAYMENT RATES DURING PANDEMIC
Alabama	25% increase in rates for care for children of first responders/health care workers	April 22, 2020	December 31, 2020
Alaska	No	N/A	N/A
Arizona*	Increase in rates for care for children of essential workers to 75th percentile (compared to standard rates at 25th percentile)	April 1, 2020	August 31, 2020
Arkansas	No	N/A	N/A
California	No	N/A	N/A
Colorado	No	N/A	N/A
Connecticut	No	N/A	N/A
Delaware*	No	N/A	N/A
District of Columbia	41.8% increase in rates for all providers	December 1, 2020	September 30, 2021
Florida	No	N/A	N/A
Georgia	Coverage of provider's full published rate	May 17, 2021	October 2, 2022
Hawaii*	Increase in rates for all providers	July 1, 2020	December 31, 2020
Idaho	No	N/A	N/A
Illinois*	30% increase in rates for care for children of essential workers	April 2020	June 2020
Indiana	20% increase in rates for all providers	April 28, 2021	March 30, 2022
Iowa	No	N/A	N/A
Kansas*	No	N/A	N/A
Kentucky	Increase in rates for care for children of essential workers	Not reported	Not reported
Louisiana	Increase in rates for family child care and in-home care to equal rates for center care	March 13, 2020	March 2021
Maine*	No	N/A	N/A
Maryland	No	N/A	N/A
Massachusetts*	No	N/A	N/A
Michigan	No	N/A	N/A
Minnesota*	No	N/A	N/A
Mississippi	25% increase in rates for all providers	April 2020	December 31, 2021
Missouri	No	N/A	N/A
Montana	Increase in rates for school-age care to equal rates for preschool-age care	August 1, 2020	June 30, 2021
Nebraska	No	N/A	N/A
Nevada	No	N/A	N/A
New Hampshire	No	N/A	N/A
New Jersey*	Increase in rates for Emergency Child Care Assistance Program for essential workers	April 2020	July 2020
New Mexico*	\$250 per month increase in rates for all providers	March 1, 2020	April 30, 2020
New York	No	N/A	N/A
North Carolina*	Increase in rates for care for children of essential workers to \$200 per month above 75th percentile of 2018 market rates	April 1, 2020	May 31, 2020
North Dakota	No	N/A	N/A
Ohio	Rates set at highest quality rate tier for all providers remaining open to serve essential workers	March 18, 2020	May 30, 2020
Oklahoma	\$5 per day increase in rates for all providers	April 2020	May 31, 2022
Oregon	No	N/A	N/A
Pennsylvania	No	N/A	N/A
Rhode Island	Increase in rates to 90th percentile for 5-star centers, to previous 5-star rate for all other centers, to highest quality rate tier for family child care	June 11, 2020	December 31, 2021
South Carolina	No	N/A	N/A
South Dakota	No	N/A	N/A
Tennessee	No	N/A	N/A
Texas*	25% increase in rates for open providers	April 2020	March 2021
Utah*	Increase in rates for all providers to 80th percentile of 2017 market rates (from 60th or 75th percentile)	September 1, 2020	Permanent increase
Vermont	No	N/A	N/A
Virginia	Increase in rates for license-exempt providers	July 2020	End of FY 2022
Washington	No	N/A	N/A
West Virginia	Rates set at highest quality rate tier for all critical care providers remaining open to serve children	Not reported	Not reported
Wisconsin	No	N/A	N/A
Wyoming	No	N/A	N/A

## NOTES FOR TABLE 4. CHILD CARE PROVIDER PAYMENT RATES: CHANGES IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

**ARIZONA:** In addition to paying higher rates for care for children of essential workers from April through August 2020, the state did so once again from December 2020 through September 2021.

**DELAWARE:** The state increased payment rates to 70 percent of the 75th percentile of market rates as of July 2021, but this change was not directly related to the pandemic.

**HAWAII:** The state temporarily increased payment rates in response to the pandemic. For example, payment rates for center care for a four-year-old increased from \$740 to \$1,200 per month and payment rates for center care for a one-year-old increased from \$1,490 to \$2,000 per month.

**ILLINOIS:** In addition to temporarily increasing payment rates for care for children of essential workers, the state also increased payment rates for family child care providers by 3.5 percent as of July 1, 2021, but this change was not directly related to the pandemic.

**KANSAS:** The state increased payment rates for care for infants and toddlers as of April 2020, but this change was not directly related to the pandemic.

**MAINE:** The state updated all payment rates to the 75th percentile of 2020–21 market rates (from the 75th percentile of 2018 market rates) as of July 3, 2021, but this change was not directly related to the pandemic.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** The state increased payment rates for family child care providers by 2 percent as of July 1, 2020, and another 2 percent as of July 1, 2021, and increased payment rates for centers by 2 percent retroactive to July 1, 2020, but these changes were not directly related to the pandemic.

**MINNESOTA:** The state updated payment rates to at least the 25th percentile of 2018 market rates as September 21, 2020, but this change was not directly related to the pandemic.

**NEW JERSEY:** Weekly payment rates for the Emergency Child Care Assistance Program were, for example, \$450.35 for care for infants and \$415.70 for care for preschoolers, compared to \$229.66 and \$159.38, respectively, for the standard child care assistance program in 2020. In addition to the higher Emergency Child Care rates, the state also provided supplemental monthly payments for children eligible for child care assistance.

**NEW MEXICO:** In addition to increasing payment rates by \$250 per month from March through April 2020, the state increased rates by \$200 per month from September through December 2020.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** The state provided the higher payment rates (\$200 per month above the 75th percentile of 2018 statewide market rates) under its Emergency Child Care Subsidy Program. Rates for the standard child care assistance program are at the 100th percentile of 2015 county market rates for care for children birth through age five and the 75th percentile of 2015 county market rates for school-age care.

**TEXAS:** The payment rate enhancement was phased down from 25 percent above standard rates in March 2021, to 20 percent in April, 15 percent in May, 10 percent in June, 5 percent in July, and discontinued as of August 2021.

**UTAH:** Prior to the pandemic, payment rates were set at the 75th percentile of 2017 market rates for infant and toddler care and the 60th percentile of 2017 market rates for care for all other age groups. After increasing payment rates for all providers to the 80th percentile of 2017 market rates in September 2020, the state increased payment rates to the 80th percentile of 2020 market rates for infant care and the 75th percentile of 2020 market rates for care for all other age groups as of October 1, 2021, but this change was not directly related to the pandemic.

# TABLE 5

## Payment to Child Care Providers for Children’s Absent Days: Changes in Response to the Pandemic

	MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DAYS/ AMOUNT OF TIME PROVIDER COULD BE PAID WHEN CHILD WAS ABSENT, AS OF FEBRUARY 2020	CHANGES IN POLICY ON PAYMENT FOR ABSENT DAYS DURING PANDEMIC	START DATE OF CHANGE IN ABSENT DAY POLICY DURING PANDEMIC	END DATE OF CHANGE IN ABSENT DAY POLICY DURING PANDEMIC
Alabama*	5 days per month (plus 5 additional days per month with documentation)	No	N/A	N/A
Alaska*	Full payment if child authorized for full month and attends at least 6 days in the month	Payment for full month if child attended at least 1 day in the month, whether authorized for full or part month	November 1, 2020	November 30, 2020
Arizona	2 days per month	Payment based on enrollment for Enrichment Centers Child Care Scholarship for essential workers	April 2020	August 31, 2020
Arkansas	12 days from July to October, 16 days from November to February, 12 days from March to June	Limits on absent days waived for all families	March 2020	May 2020
California	Paid for excused absences, and some additional absences if child's attendance generally consistent with schedule	Payment based on enrollment, regardless of attendance	March 2020	June 30, 2021
Colorado*	Counties must pay for at least 6 to 15 days per 12-month period, depending on provider's quality level	Counties encouraged to pay for at least 14 absences per month or based on enrollment, regardless of operating status	March 18, 2020	June 30, 2020
Connecticut	Payment for full month if child attends at least 1 day of the month	Payment based on enrollment, regardless of attendance	April 2020	June 2020
Delaware	5 days per month	Increased to 10 days per month	April 1, 2020	August 30, 2021
District of Columbia	5 unexcused and 15 excused days per month	Increased to 10 unexcused days per month	November 1, 2020	To be determined
Florida*	3 days per month (up to 7 additional days in extraordinary circumstances)	Payment based on enrollment	March 2020	September 2020
Georgia*	Payment for full week if child attends at least 1 day of the week	Payment based on enrollment if child attended at least once since March 1, 2020	March 16, 2020	To be determined
Hawaii	Prospective payment based on previous month's need	Payment based on enrollment, even if child not attending at all during month	March 29, 2020	End of emergency
Idaho	Payment for full month unless absent for longer than a month	Payment regardless of attendance or operating status	March 2020	June 2020
Illinois*	20% of eligible days	Payment regardless of attendance or operating status	April 2020	June 2020
Indiana	20 personal days per year	Increased to 80 personal days per year	April 2020	June 2020
Iowa	4 days per month	Payment for unlimited absent days	March 9, 2020	August 31, 2021
Kansas	Payment on enrollment (prospective) basis	Cases may not be closed due to non-use of benefits	March 16, 2020	To be determined
Kentucky	5 days per month (additional days allowed in extraordinary circumstances)	Payment based on enrollment	March 15, 2020	July 15, 2020
Louisiana	5 days per month	Payment based on enrollment	March 13, 2020	January 31, 2021
Maine	200 hours of excused absences per year (if child enrolled full time)	Payment based on enrollment	March 18, 2020	July 3, 2020
Maryland	60 days per calendar year	Payment based on enrollment	March 30, 2020	July 20, 2020
Massachusetts*	45 days per 12-month authorization	Payment based on enrollment	July 3, 2020	Through summer 2021 (or later)
Michigan*	15% of authorized time (for full-time care)	Payment regardless of attendance or operating status	March 16, 2020	June 20, 2020
Minnesota*	10 consecutive days, 25 days per year (additional days for medical condition)	Increased flexibility on medical exemptions from absent day limits	March 13, 2020	June 27, 2021
Mississippi	5 days per month	Payment based on enrollment	April 2020	December 31, 2021

## TABLE 5 (CONTINUED)

### Payment to Child Care Providers for Children's Absent Days: Changes in Response to the Pandemic

	MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DAYS/ AMOUNT OF TIME PROVIDER COULD BE PAID WHEN CHILD WAS ABSENT, AS OF FEBRUARY 2020	CHANGES IN POLICY ON PAYMENT FOR ABSENT DAYS DURING PANDEMIC	START DATE OF CHANGE IN ABSENT DAY POLICY DURING PANDEMIC	END DATE OF CHANGE IN ABSENT DAY POLICY DURING PANDEMIC
Missouri	5 days per month	Payment can be requested by providers for any children not in attendance at their facilities due to the pandemic	August 1, 2020	August 31, 2021
Montana*	2 days per month	Payment for full authorized amount, regardless of attendance	March 12, 2020	May 31, 2020
Nebraska*	No absent days paid	Payment for all absent days related to COVID	April 16, 2020	30 days after end of emergency
Nevada*	21 days per year	Payment based on enrollment	March 1, 2021	July 1, 2021
New Hampshire*	62 hours per year	No	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	20% of scheduled attendance, not to exceed 10 consecutive days	Payment based on enrollment	March 2020	To be determined
New Mexico	Payment based on enrollment	No	N/A	N/A
New York*	Local district option to pay for up to 40 days per 6-month period	Local option to pay for additional absent days if provider was open and child did not attend due to effects of COVID	March 16, 2020	July 31, 2021
North Carolina	10 days per month	Payment based on enrollment	March 1, 2020	March 31, 2020
North Dakota*	40 hours per month	Payment based on enrollment	April 1, 2020	June 30, 2020
Ohio	10 days per 6-month period (January-June and July-December)	Increased to 20 days per 6-month period (January-June and July-December)	March 13, 2020	To be determined
Oklahoma	7 days per month (if child in full-time care at least 15 days per month)	Increased to 11 or 12 days per month (if child in full-time care at least 11 days per month)	February 2021	To be determined
Oregon	30 days per month for certified centers if attending at least 1 day per month; 5 days for other providers	Payment based on enrollment for all providers, with no requirement to attend 1 day per month	April 1, 2020	90 days after end of emergency
Pennsylvania	40 days per state fiscal year	Payment based on enrollment regardless of attendance	March 1, 2020	August 31, 2020
Rhode Island	5 days per month, with good-cause exemptions permitted upon request	Payment based on enrollment (exemption from limit on absent days for good cause granted without request)	April 1, 2020	December 31, 2021
South Carolina	31 days per 52 weeks	Payment for absences or closures due to COVID with no limit	March 16, 2020	August 30, 2020
South Dakota*	50 hours per month	Payment for all absences related to COVID	March 1, 2020	September 30, 2021
Tennessee*	20 consecutive days	Payment based on enrollment	March 3, 2020	December 31, 2020
Texas	Payment based on enrollment (but assistance terminated after 40 total unexplained absences)	Removed limit on absent days	March 1, 2020	April 1, 2021
Utah*	Payment on prospective basis, with provider retaining payment if child attended at least 8 hours per month	Payment based on enrollment	March 2020	September 30, 2020
Vermont*	Unlimited sick days, 15 provider closed days, 10 parent vacation days per year	Payment based on scheduled rather than actual attendance	March 16, 2020	May 30, 2020
Virginia*	36 days per state fiscal year for licensed providers; 0 days per state fiscal year for license-exempt providers	Increased to 76 days per state fiscal year for all providers	March 18, 2020	June 30, 2020
Washington	Payment for full month if child attends at least 1 day of the month	Payment based on enrollment regardless of attendance	March 16, 2020	August 31, 2020
West Virginia	Payment for full month if child attends at least 13 days of the month	Payment based on enrollment regardless of attendance	March 1, 2020	September 15, 2020
Wisconsin*	Payment based on enrollment	Payment based on enrollment regardless of attendance or operating status	March 12, 2020	June 30, 2020
Wyoming*	15% of authorized time	Payment based on enrollment regardless of attendance	March 2020	October 31, 2020

## NOTES FOR TABLE 5.

# PAYMENT TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS FOR CHILDREN'S ABSENT DAYS: CHANGES IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

**ALABAMA:** Providers can be paid for an additional five days while a child is absent if documentation from a licensed physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist is submitted or if the child is registered with the early intervention program.

**ALASKA:** In addition to paying for the full month for children attending at least 1 day in the month during November 2020, the state also did so during the months of January and February 2021.

**COLORADO:** Prior to the pandemic, counties could pay for additional absent days beyond the state minimums (at least 6 days per 12-month period for providers at quality level one, 10 days at quality level two, 15 days at quality levels three to five). From March to June 2020, counties were encouraged to pay for at least 14 absences per month or based on enrollment, regardless of operating status. As of June 30, 2020, counties were encouraged to only continue paying the expanded absences to providers that were open and operating, and the minimum recommended number of paid absent days was reduced to 5 per month. In September 2020, the state returned to the pre-pandemic policy. In October 2020, the state permanently changed the minimum number of absent days for which counties must pay to 2 per month for providers at quality levels one and two and 3 per month at quality levels three to five.

**FLORIDA:** After paying based on enrollment from March to September 2020, the state paid providers for up to 16 absent days in October, 14 absent days in November, and 12 absent days in December, before the pre-pandemic policy was restored in January 2021.

**GEORGIA:** Providers were paid regardless of their operating status from March 16, 2020, through October 25, 2020. As of October 26, 2020, providers must be open for care or in an approved temporarily closed status to receive payment.

**ILLINOIS:** As of July 1, 2021, providers can receive full payment if a child is absent for up to 30 percent of eligible days, up from 20 percent of eligible days under the previous policy.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** Prior to the pandemic, in addition to paying for up to 45 absent days per 12 months, the state also allowed children with health conditions to be authorized for unlimited absences. As of March 12, 2020, the health exemption was allowed for all families who had COVID concerns. As of July 3, 2020, the state began paying based on enrollment and eliminated the limit on the total number of absent days. However, the state retains its pre-pandemic limit of three consecutive unexplained absences twice during a family's 12-month authorization.

**MICHIGAN:** Prior to the pandemic, all providers could bill for up to 360 hours of a child's absences per fiscal year. From March 16, 2020, to June 20, 2020, the state paid regardless of children's attendance or the program's operating status. From September 27, 2020, to December 31, 2020, providers could bill for an additional 60 hours of a child's absences related to COVID (on top of the usual 360 hours allowed). As of March 28, 2021, and until further notice, providers can request a billing exception for absence hours that go beyond 10 consecutive days for COVID-related program closures or children's absences due to COVID.

**MINNESOTA:** Prior to the pandemic, providers could be paid for additional absent days beyond the usual limit if the child, the child's parent, or the child's sibling living in the same home had a documented medical condition. From March 13, 2020, to June 27, 2021, an absent day exemption had to be granted if requested by the family or provider, and more flexibility was allowed in how and when the medical exemption could be requested; the family or provider could request the exemption verbally or in writing or a medical professional or the family's provider could complete a form, and requests could be made for children who were not ill but chose to stay home as a precaution. Standard medical exemption policies resumed as of June 28, 2021.

**MONTANA:** After paying the full authorized amount, regardless of attendance, from March 12, 2020, to May 31, 2020, the state allowed providers to be paid for up to 10 absent days per month (an increase from the pre-pandemic limit of 2 absent days per month) from August 1, 2020, to May 31, 2021.

**NEBRASKA:** As of September 15, 2020, the state established a new permanent policy allowing payment for up to 5 absent days per month.

**NEVADA:** In addition to paying all licensed child care providers and privately owned school-age providers based on enrollment from March 1, 2021, through July 1, 2021, the state paid any licensed providers closed by any government agency due to COVID based on the previous month's enrollment from March 30, 2020, to June 30, 2020. The state also did not subject families' child care assistance to termination based on absent days from March 30, 2020, to June 30, 2020, as well as from March 1, 2021, through July 1, 2021.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE:** The state did not make any temporary changes to its absent day policy directly related to the pandemic, but the state did permanently change its policy to allow 21 absence hours per month for children in full-time care (and 13 hours for part-time) as of August 2020.

**NEW YORK:** Under the standard policy, local districts can elect to make payments for up to 12 routine absences per month, with a maximum of 12 days in a 3-month period and 24 days in a 6-month period. Districts could also elect to make payments for additional absences due to extenuating circumstances—up to 3 per month, with a maximum of 8 in a 3-month period or 16 in a 6-month period (for a total of 40 routine and extenuating absences per 6-month period). During the pandemic emergency, as part of a waiver process, districts were offered the opportunity to expand the maximum total number of absent days for which they would provide payment.

**NORTH DAKOTA:** After paying based on enrollment from April 1, 2020, to June 30, 2020, the state allowed providers to be paid for absences if their program was shut down due to COVID and they provided verification from July through November 2020. As of December 2020, the state allowed all absent hours without verification of provider closures.

**SOUTH DAKOTA:** Reasons for COVID-related absences included: child care program closure to address program needs related to COVID; a family's choice to keep their child home out of precaution or because the parent was not working due to COVID; or a family being quarantined at home due to exposure to COVID or a COVID illness.

**TENNESSEE:** The state continued payment to providers that were closed due to the impacts of COVID until June 30, 2020, and continued payment to providers in circumstances where the provider was open but the child was not attending until December 31, 2020. Note that throughout this period, the state still reached out to families after an absence of 20 consecutive days to check if the child was returning to care or if payment should be stopped.

**UTAH:** The pre-pandemic attendance policy was reinstated on October 1, 2020. On June 1, 2021, the state implemented payment based on enrollment; a child must attend at least 8 hours in the initial benefit month and the provider must report if an enrolled child does not attend in 90 days. It is anticipated payment based on enrollment will remain in place through June 2023.

**VERMONT:** After paying based on scheduled rather than actual attendance from March 16, 2020, to May 30, 2020, the state allowed families whose children who had a health condition or other COVID-related concern to receive approval for additional absent days from May 31, 2020, to July 4, 2020.

**VIRGINIA:** After paying for up to 76 absent days per state fiscal year for all providers from March 18, 2020, to June 30, 2020, the state paid for up to 180 absent days per state fiscal year from March 12, 2021, to December 31, 2021. Child care providers that must temporarily close due to a COVID outbreak may be paid for absent days during the required period of closure.

**WISCONSIN:** Pre-pandemic, parents receiving child care assistance were required to report within 10 calendar days if their child had not attended child care for 20 consecutive calendar days and child care providers were required to report when a child receiving child care assistance had not attended at all within the previous 30 calendar days; these reporting requirements were suspended during the public health emergency.

**WYOMING:** After paying based on enrollment from March through October 2020, the state resumed doing so as of March 2021; this policy was still in place as of November 2021.

# TABLE 6

## School-Age Care Payment Policies: Changes in Response to the Pandemic

	CHANGE IN PAYMENT POLICIES FOR SCHOOL-AGE CARE DURING PANDEMIC	START DATE OF CHANGE IN SCHOOL-AGE PAYMENT POLICY DURING PANDEMIC	END DATE OF CHANGE IN SCHOOL-AGE PAYMENT POLICY DURING PANDEMIC
Alabama	No	N/A	N/A
Alaska*	No	N/A	N/A
Arizona	No	N/A	N/A
Arkansas	Full-time care authorized for school-age children	March 2020	May 2020
California*	Full vacation payment rate during remote learning	March 2020	June 30, 2021
Colorado*	Additional authorization allowed for school-age care during remote learning	August 21, 2020	Ongoing
Connecticut*	Payment for school-age care authorized during remote learning	Start of 2020-21 school year	End of 2020-21 school year
Delaware	Full-time payment for school-age care during full-time remote learning	July 2020	To be determined
District of Columbia	Full-time payment for full-time school-age care	November 1, 2020	To be determined
Florida	Full-time payment for school-age care during remote learning	Start of 2020-21 school year	Ongoing
Georgia*	Full-time payment for school-age care	March 16, 2020	September 12, 2020
Hawaii*	Full-time payment for school-age care during remote learning	August 1, 2020	January 1, 2021
Idaho	No	N/A	N/A
Illinois	Full-time payment for school-age care during full-time remote learning	July 2020	June 30, 2021
Indiana	Full-day payment for all school-age care	April 2020	July 31, 2021
Iowa	Providers allowed to bill extra units if providing full-time school-age care	March 9, 2020	August 31, 2021
Kansas	Payment for school-age care equal to payment during summer month of August	September 1, 2020	September 30, 2020
Kentucky	Full-time payment for full-time school-age care during remote learning	Not reported	Ongoing
Louisiana	Payment at maximum daily rate, regardless of hours in care	March 13, 2020	January 31, 2021
Maine*	Payment for school hours during school closure or remote learning	Not reported	Not reported
Maryland	No	N/A	N/A
Massachusetts*	Full-time payment for school-age care during remote learning	September 29, 2020	End of 2020-21 school year
Michigan*	Payment allowed for school-day hours when remote learning is only option	August 16, 2020	July 3, 2021
Minnesota*	Payment for school-age care during remote learning time	Start of 2020-21 school year	End of 2020-21 school year
Mississippi	Full-time payment for school-age children (whether in attendance or not)	April 2020	August 2020
Missouri	Full-time payment for school-age children during remote learning	Not reported	December 31, 2020
Montana	School-age care payment rate changed to equal preschool-age care payment rate	August 1, 2020	June 30, 2021
Nebraska	Payment allowed for school-age care during remote learning	Not reported	Not reported
Nevada	Payment for school-age care during remote learning for school closure	August 10, 2020	Not reported
New Hampshire	Full-time payment for school-age care	March 17, 2020	Not reported
New Jersey	Full-time payment for school-age care during remote learning	August 2020	June 30, 2021
New Mexico	Full-time contracts during remote learning	March 2020	Ongoing
New York	Payment allowed for school-age care during remote learning	August 19, 2020	Permanent change
North Carolina*	Full-time payment for school-age care during full-time remote learning	April 2020	Ongoing
North Dakota	Payment for school-age care during remote learning (full-time or hybrid), if no in-person option	September 2020	To be determined
Ohio	Payment for school-age care during remote or hybrid learning	August 25, 2020	Permanent change
Oklahoma	Full-time payment rate allowable for school-age care	April 1, 2020	May 31, 2022
Oregon	Full-time payment for school-age care during remote learning	September 2020	To be determined
Pennsylvania	Full-time payment for full-time school-age care on days when children do not attend school in person	August 31, 2020	July 1, 2021
Rhode Island	Full-time school-age care could be authorized when school normally in session	April 1, 2020	End of 2020-21 school year
South Carolina*	Full-time payment for school-age care	March 16, 2020	August 30, 2020
South Dakota	Full-time payment allowed when children not in school due to closure, hybrid schedules, or remote learning	March 16, 2020	December 31, 2020 (or later)
Tennessee*	Uniform full-time school-out rate regardless of hours of attendance	August 1, 2020	September 30, 2021
Texas	Full-time child care could be requested when in-person learning not available	August 21, 2020	To be determined
Utah	Increase from part-time to full-time rate when school is temporarily closed for up to 14 days	October 2020	June 30, 2021
Vermont	Full-time payment rate for school-age care allowed when child not attending school in person	September 8, 2020	End of 2020-21 school year
Virginia*	Full-time payment for school-age children during remote learning	March 2020	June 30, 2021
Washington*	School-age care authorizations automatically increased to full day	March 16, 2020	August 31, 2020
West Virginia*	No	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin	Payment authorized for time attending school-age care during remote learning	August 11, 2020	End of 2020-21 school year
Wyoming*	No	N/A	N/A

## NOTES FOR TABLE 6.

# SCHOOL-AGE CARE PAYMENT POLICIES: CHANGES IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

**ALASKA:** The state did not make specific changes to its payment policies for school-age care, but it paid all providers, including school-age care providers, for the full month for children attending at least 1 day in the month during November 2020, January 2021, and February 2021.

**CALIFORNIA:** The state paid at the full vacation rate if children were attending child care in person while receiving distance learning services through their school, and paid at the full school rate if children were not receiving in-person services due to sheltering-in-place.

**COLORADO:** Counties were given guidance that allows additional authorization for school-age children while completing remote, virtual, or online schoolwork if the following criteria apply: the child care provider is strictly providing care and supervision of the child who is participating in remote learning activities; and the child care provider is not acting as a teacher or conducting direct instruction that would result in academic credit.

**CONNECTICUT:** If a child was in a distance learning model, before- and after-school care could be approved in addition to the hours the child was participating in educational instruction.

**GEORGIA:** After providing full-time payment for school-age care from March 16, 2020, through September 12, 2020, the state started paying based on the school calendar or the type of care provided to the child as of September 13, 2020; under this policy, if a child participates in distance learning at a child care program, the provider is paid at the full-time rate.

**HAWAII:** In addition to providing full-time payment for school-age care during remote learning from August 1, 2020, to January 1, 2021, the state reduced the minimum number of hours per month to qualify for full-time rates from 97 to 87.

**MAINE:** The state is paying based on enrollment and allows for covering 2 weeks of absence due to quarantining.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** During the 2020–21 school year, the state provided full-day payment for children who had returned to in-person school but who were authorized for full time on school closure and who may have needed full-time care at any time. The state provides full-time payment for all school-age children during the summer and was evaluating policies for fall 2021.

**MICHIGAN:** In addition to allowing payment for school-day hours when remote learning was the only option, the state increased the authorized hours for school-age care to 90 biweekly in March 2020.

**MINNESOTA:** As of June 27, 2021, child care cannot be authorized or paid for school-age children who are remote learning while in-person school is available.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** In addition to allowing full-time payment for school-age care during full-time remote learning, the state provided child care assistance for school-age children attending a licensed child care center or home or registered community-based organization for remote learning through the Emergency School-Age Family Support Program during October and November 2020.

**SOUTH CAROLINA:** After providing full-time payment for school-age care from March 16, 2020, to August 30, 2020, the state started providing payment during remote schooling as of August 31, 2020.

**TENNESSEE:** In addition to paying a full-time school-out rate regardless of hours of attendance from August 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021, the state also established a network of temporary sites to serve school-age children of essential workers that continued until August 31, 2021.

**VIRGINIA:** All school divisions are required to offer in-person options for the 2021–22 school year. If a school-age child is enrolled in the local public school system and elected to participate in remote learning, full-time care may only be approved in limited circumstances, such as when the child has a medical condition that requires the child to remain in remote learning.

**WASHINGTON:** After automatically increasing school-age care authorizations to full day from March 16, 2020, to August 31, 2020, the state allowed families to be eligible for full-day authorizations based on their need and eligibility from September 2020 through June 2021.

**WEST VIRGINIA:** The state did not make specific changes to its payment policies for school-age care, but it did pay based on enrollment rather than attendance for all providers, including school-age care providers, from March 1, 2020, to September 15, 2020.

**WYOMING:** The state did not make specific changes to its payment policies for school-age care, but it provided payment of the full authorization for all children, including school-age children, with active authorizations from March 2020 to October 31, 2020, and resumed doing so as of March 2021; this policy was still in place as of November 2021.



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