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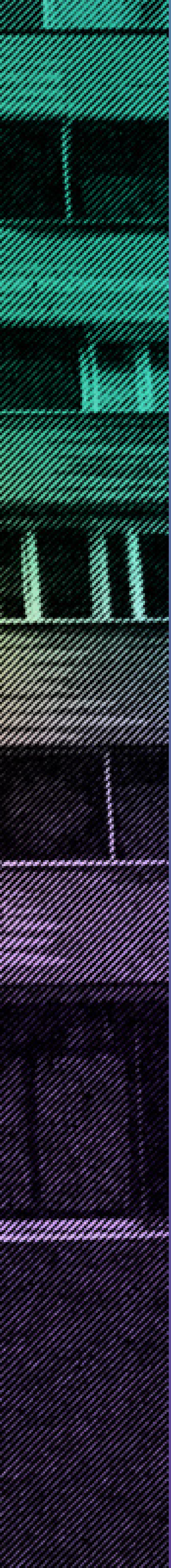
TWO STEPS FORWARD ONE STEP BACK

STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES 2023

by KAREN SCHULMAN

MAY 2024



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fights 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 over 50 years, the organization has been on the leading edge of every major legal and policy victory for women.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Child care is crucial for the well-being of parents, children, and our nation. It enables parents to work and support their families, or obtain education or training to get a better, more stable job. It gives children a safe, nurturing environment to learn and develop skills they need to succeed in school and in life.[1] By bolstering the current and future workforce, it serves as the backbone of our nation's economy. The importance of child care became even more apparent during the COVID pandemic. Yet, the child care sector was essential—and fragile—long before the crisis, and it is now in jeopardy as relief funding provided during the pandemic expires.

Many families, particularly low-income families,[2] struggle with the high price of child care. The average annual fee for full-time care ranges from approximately $5,700 to $25,500, depending on the age of the child, the type of care, and where the family lives.[3] These costs can strain families' budgets, force parents to use lower-cost care even if they would prefer other options for their children, or prevent parents from working because they cannot afford care. At the same time, child care workers—who are predominantly women and disproportionately women of color—are paid poverty-level wages. The median wage for child care workers is just $14.60 per hour,[4] and Black and Latina child care workers often earn even less than their white peers.[5] Both relieving families' child care cost burdens and lifting child care workers' compensation will require significant additional public investment. New investments would enable families to have greater access to affordable, stable, nurturing child care and workers to receive fairer pay and benefits.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the major federal child care assistance

By bolstering the current and future workforce, child care serves as the backbone of our nation's economy.

program, provides some support for families needing child care and for child care programs and providers. However, due to inadequate funding, there are significant gaps in child care assistance policies, which are set by states within federal parameters. To assess the status of state child care assistance policies—where the gaps are, where progress is being made, and where further progress is needed—this report examines states' policies in five key areas. These key areas include: income eligibility limits to qualify for child care assistance, waiting lists for child care assistance, copayments required of parents receiving child care assistance, payment rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance, and eligibility for child care assistance for parents searching for a job. These policies are fundamental to determining families' ability to obtain child care assistance and the extent of help that assistance provides.

This analysis of child care assistance policies as of February 2023 shows that many states were able to sustain and build on the progress they had made over the previous years using the relief funding that was provided during the pandemic. Yet, even with the additional resources, substantial gaps remain in states' policies. In addition, state progress on child care assistance policies slowed in comparison to the previous years, and a number of states started taking steps backward as they began using up their temporary relief funding—a large portion of which expired in September 2023, with the remainder set to expire in September 2024. State policies could continue to backslide as the rest of the relief funds expire if substantial new funding is not provided.

Without an ongoing commitment of significant resources for child care, states will continue to have restrictive income limits that keep low- and moderate-income families from qualifying for child care assistance, long waiting lists that prevent eligible families from receiving assistance, high copayments that place significant cost burdens on families receiving assistance, and low payment rates that deprive child care programs of the resources needed to fairly compensate child care workers and offer high-quality care.

FUNDING FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE IN 2023, 2022, AND 2001

CCDBG funding—excluding supplemental funding measures approved in 2020 and 2021—totaled $11.571 billion in FY 2023,[6] an increase from $9.715 billion in FY 2022[7] ($10.196 billion in FY 2023 dollars).[8] With this increase in funding—as well as a series of increases in discretionary funding over the previous several years, including a $2.37 billion increase in FY 2018,[9] and an increase in annual mandatory funding that was approved as part of the American Rescue Plan Act in 2021—CCDBG funding in FY 2023 exceeded the funding level in FY 2010, when the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)[10] temporarily boosted funding; CCDBG funding in FY 2010 was $6.044 billion before adjusting for inflation,[11] or $8.649 billion in FY 2023 dollars.[12] CCDBG funding in FY 2023 was also above the FY 2002 funding level after adjusting for inflation—$8.408 billion in FY 2023 dollars[13]—which was the peak funding level prior to ARRA.

Another important source of child care funding is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. States may transfer up to 30 percent of their TANF block grant funds to CCDBG, or use TANF funds directly for child care without first transferring the money. States' use of TANF dollars for child care (including both transfers and direct funding) was $2.302 billion in FY 2022 (the most recent year for which data are available),[14] below the high of $3.966 billion in FY 2000[15] even without adjusting for inflation. (In FY 2023 dollars, use of TANF funds for child care was $2.416 billion in FY 2022 compared to $7.344 billion in FY 2000.[16])

Total federal child care funding in FY 2023 from CCDBG and TANF funds (assuming the use of TANF in FY 2023 was the same as the FY 2022 inflation-adjusted amount), was $13.987 billion (not including supplemental funding). This amount remained below total funding in FY 2001 after adjusting for inflation—$14.507 billion in FY 2023 dollars.[17] However, child care funding in FY 2020 through FY 2023 was significantly boosted by substantial supplementary funding provided in response to the pandemic:

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.[18]

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, signed into law on December 27, 2020, included $10 billion in supplemental child care discretionary funds.[19]

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.[20]

While these relief measures provided historic increases in child care funding, all of the funding, except the mandatory funding increase included in ARPA, is temporary, and has expired or will soon expire—CARES child care funds, CRRSA child care funds, and ARPA child care stabilization grants had to be obligated (committed) by September 2022 and liquidated (expended) by September 2023, and ARPA discretionary child care funds had to be obligated by September 2023 and must be liquidated by September 2024. The policy improvements supported by this funding are at risk of being temporary as well without long-term investments in child care.

SUMMARY OF KEY POLICIES AS OF FEBRUARY 2023 AND CHANGES SINCE 2022 AND 2001

Changes in states' policies between February 2022 and February 2023 and between 2001 and February 2023 are described in more detail below, but in summary:

Income eligibility limits reveal how generous a state is in determining whether families qualify for child care assistance.[21] In 2023, a family with an income above 200 percent of poverty could not qualify for child care assistance in 20 states. Between 2022 and 2023, nine states increased their income limits for child care assistance by a dollar amount that exceeded inflation; 36 states increased their income limits as a dollar amount to adjust for inflation, as measured against the change in the state median income or federal poverty level; four states kept their income limits the same as a dollar amount; and two states reduced their income limits as a dollar amount. Between 2001 and 2023, income limits declined as a percentage of the federal poverty level in eight states.

Waiting lists help reveal whether families who qualify for child care assistance actually receive it. Nine states had waiting lists or frozen intake for child care assistance in 2023, a decrease from 11 states in 2022 and 21 states in 2001. In 2023, there were 27,900 more children on waiting lists than in 2022, but approximately 96,800 fewer children on waiting lists than in 2001.

Parent copayment levels reveal whether low-income parents receiving child care assistance have significant out-of-pocket costs for child care. The nationwide average amount that families who pay for child care spend on child care is approximately 7 percent of income, but in 2023, copayments for families receiving child care assistance were above 7 percent of income for a family at 150 percent of poverty in 11 states, and for a family at 100 percent of poverty in five states. For a family at 150 percent of poverty, copayments as a percentage of income decreased in seven states, increased in 10 states, and stayed the same in the remaining states between 2022 and 2023. For a family at 100 percent of poverty, copayments as a percentage of income decreased in six states, increased in eight states, and stayed the same in the remaining states between 2022 and 2023. In 18 states, a family at 100 percent of poverty paid a higher percentage of its income in copayments in 2023 than in 2001.

Provider payment rates reveal the extent to which families receiving child care assistance may be limited in their choice of child care providers and providers serving families receiving assistance may be limited in the quality of care they can offer to families. Twenty-one states increased at least some of their payment rates for providers serving families receiving child care assistance between 2022 and 2023. Yet only 17 states had all of their base payment rates at or above the 75th percentile of current market rates (the federally recommended level) in 2023, higher than the 14 states with rates at the recommended level in 2022, but lower than the 22 states with rates at the recommended level in 2001. Forty-one states had higher payment rates for higher-quality care (tiered rates) in 2023, the same number of states as in 2022.[22] However, in over one-third of these states, even the higher rates were below the federally recommended level in 2023.

Eligibility policies for parents searching for work reveal whether families can receive child care assistance while a parent seeks employment, so that a child's care arrangement is not disrupted and the family has child care available as soon as the parent finds a job. Fifty-one states allowed families receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it while a parent searched for a job in 2023, the same number of states as in 2022. Eighteen states allowed families not receiving child care assistance to qualify for assistance while a parent searched for a job in 2023, a decrease from 20 states in 2022.[23]

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).

NWLC sent the state child care administrators a survey in the fall of 2023 requesting data on policies as of February 2023 in five key areas—income eligibility limits, waiting lists, parent copayments, provider payment rates, and eligibility for child care assistance for parents searching for a job. The survey also asked state administrators to report on any policy changes that the state had made or expected to make after February 2023 in each of the five areas. The survey questions about these policy areas were largely the same as in surveys of state administrators conducted by NWLC in previous years. The survey also asked states to report on the expected impact of the expiration of ARPA child care funding; this information will be analyzed separately. NWLC staff contacted state administrators for follow-up information as necessary. NWLC obtained supplementary information about states' policies from documents available on state agencies' websites.

NWLC collected the 2022 data used in this report for comparison purposes through a similar process and analyzed these data in NWLC's May 2023 report, *Precarious Progress: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2022*. The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) collected the 2001 data used in this report and analyzed these data in CDF's report, *State Developments in Child Care, Early Education and School-Age Care 2001*. CDF staff collected the data through surveys and interviews with state child care advocates and verified the data with state child care administrators. The CDF data reflect policies in effect as of June 1, 2001, unless otherwise indicated. NWLC uses 2001 as a basis for comparison because it was the year between the peak year for TANF funding for child care, FY 2000, and what was the peak year for CCDBG funding, FY 2002, prior to FY 2010, when ARRA provided a temporary boost in CCDBG funding, and FY 2021, when COVID relief and recovery funding provided a temporary boost (see the section above on funding for child care assistance).

INCOME ELIGIBILITY LIMITS

A family's access to child care assistance depends on a state's income eligibility limit. The family's ability to obtain child care assistance is affected not only by a state's income limit in a given year, but also by whether the state adjusts the limit for inflation each year so that the family does not become ineligible for assistance simply because its income keeps pace with inflation.

Between 2022 and 2023, nearly one-fifth of the states increased their income eligibility limits as a dollar amount by enough to exceed inflation, as measured against the change in the federal poverty level or state median income, depending on which benchmark the state used.[24] In addition, over two-thirds of the states increased their income limits as a dollar amount by enough to keep pace with inflation. However, four states did not increase their income limits as a dollar amount, and two states reduced their income limits as a dollar amount.

Between 2001 and 2023, over two-thirds of the states increased their income eligibility limits as a dollar amount by enough to exceed inflation, as measured against the change in the federal poverty level.[25] However, almost one-sixth of the states failed to increase their income limits sufficiently to keep pace with inflation, as measured against the change in the federal poverty level.

Although a number of states raised their income eligibility limits between 2022 and 2023, nearly two-fifths of the states still had income limits at or below 200 percent of poverty in 2023.

Nine states increased their income eligibility limits by a dollar amount that exceeded inflation between 2022 and 2023 (*see Table 1a*).[26]

Thirty-six states increased their income eligibility limits as a dollar amount to adjust for inflation between 2022 and 2023, including 31 states that adjusted for one year of inflation,[27] as well as five states that adjusted for two years of inflation.[28]

Four states kept their income eligibility limits the same as a dollar amount between 2022 and 2023.[29]

Two states lowered their income eligibility limits as a dollar amount between 2022 and 2023.[30]

All 51 states increased their income eligibility limits as a dollar amount between 2001 and 2023 (*see Table 1b*). In 37 of these states, the increase was great enough that the income limit was higher as a percentage of the federal poverty level in 2023 than in 2001.[31] In another six states, the increase was great enough that the income limit stayed the same, or nearly the same, as a percentage of the federal poverty level in 2023 as in 2001.[32] However, in eight states, the increase was not sufficient to keep pace with the federal poverty level, so the income limit was lower as a percentage of the federal poverty level in 2023 than in 2001.

All states set their income eligibility limits above 100 percent of the federal poverty level in 2023.[33] However, seven states set their income limits at or below 150 percent of poverty.[34] A total of 20 states set their income limits at or below 200 percent of poverty.[35] Yet, in every county and city across the country, a family needs an income substantially above 200 percent of poverty to adequately afford their basic needs, including housing, food, child care, transportation, health care, and other necessities, according to data from the Economic Policy Institute.[36]

Seven states set their income limits to qualify for assistance at or below 150 percent of poverty in 2023: Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Montana, and Ohio.

WAITING LISTS

Even if families are eligible for child care assistance, and apply for it, they may not necessarily receive it. Instead, their state may place eligible families who apply for help on a waiting list or freeze intake (turn away eligible families without adding their names to a waiting list). Families may remain on the waiting list for a long time before receiving child care assistance, or may never receive it. Without the help they need to afford child care, families on the waiting list must make difficult choices.

According to several studies,[37] many of these families struggle to pay for reliable, good-quality child care while paying for other basic necessities such as food and rent, or turn to low-cost—and frequently low-quality—care. Some families cannot afford child care at all, which can make it impossible for parents to work.

In 2023, most states were able to serve eligible families who applied for child care assistance without placing any on waiting lists or freezing intake, but nearly one-fifth of the states had waiting lists or frozen intake for at least some families applying for assistance. The number of states with waiting lists or frozen intake in 2023 was below the number in 2022 and 2001. The total number of children on waiting lists in 2023 was lower than in 2001 but higher than in 2022.[38]

Nine states had waiting lists or frozen intake in 2023, a decrease from 11 states in 2022,[39] and from 21 states in 2001 (*see Table 2*).

Approximately 27,900 more children were on waiting lists in 2023 than in 2022—an increase of 36 percent (from over 78,000 children). However, the number of children on waiting lists in 2023 was still 96,800 lower than in 2001—a decrease of 48 percent (from nearly 203,000 children).[40]

Of the eight states that had waiting lists or frozen intake in both 2022 and 2023, three states had shorter waiting lists in 2023 than in 2022, and three states had longer waiting lists. In the remaining two states with waiting lists or frozen intake in both 2022 and 2023, it was not possible to compare the length of waiting lists based on the available data.

Of the eight states that had waiting lists or frozen intake in both 2001 and 2023, three states had shorter waiting lists in 2023 than in 2001, and two states had longer waiting lists. In the remaining three states with waiting lists or frozen intake in both 2001 and 2023, it was not possible to compare the length of waiting lists based on the available data.

Nine states had waiting lists, or frozen intake for all families but certain priority groups, in 2023: California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Texas.

COPAYMENTS

Most states require families receiving child care assistance to contribute toward their child care costs based on a sliding fee scale that is designed to charge progressively higher copayments to families at progressively higher income levels.

A few states also take into account the cost of care used by a family in determining the amount of the family's copayment. Copayment levels matter because if they are high, they can place a serious financial burden on families or may discourage families from participating in the child care assistance program.

This report analyzes state copayment policies by considering two hypothetical families: a family of three with an income at 100 percent of the federal poverty level and a family of three with an income at 150 percent of the federal poverty level.[41] Many states reduced or waived copayments in 2022 and/or 2023 as part of their efforts to lessen burdens for families during or following the pandemic emergency, with the help of federal child care relief funds. Yet, in many cases, these copayments were reduced or waived only temporarily and, in several states, reverted to previous levels in 2023. As a result, in approximately one-fifth of the states, copayments increased as a percentage of income between 2022 and 2023.

Several states had high copayments in 2023. CCDBG regulations issued in 2016 and still in effect in 2023 recommended—but did not require—that copayments charged to families receiving child care assistance not exceed 7 percent of their income;[42] under new CCDBG regulations issued in March 2024, states will be required to set copayments at levels that do not exceed 7 percent of a family's income.[43] This benchmark was based on Census data showing that, nationwide, families who pay for child care (including those who receive child care assistance and those who do not) spend an average of approximately 7 percent of their income on child care.[44] But many states fail to meet this benchmark. In over one-fifth of the states, a family at 150 percent of poverty that was receiving child care assistance was required to pay more than 7 percent of its income in copayments in 2023.

In seven states, copayments for a family of three at 150 percent of poverty[45] **decreased** as a percentage of income between 2022 and 2023 (*see Table 3a*). In 33 states, copayments remained the same as a percentage of income. In 10 states, copayments increased as a percentage of income. In one state, a family at 150 percent of poverty was not eligible for child care assistance in 2022 or 2023.[46]

In 31 states, copayments for a family of three at 150 percent of poverty[47] **decreased** as a percentage of income between 2001 and 2023. In six states, copayments remained the same as a percentage of income. In 11 states, copayments increased as a percentage of income. In two states, a family at 150 percent of poverty was eligible for child care assistance in 2023 but not 2001, and in one state, a family at 150 percent of poverty was not eligible for child care assistance in either 2023 or 2001.

In six states, copayments for a family of three at 100 percent of poverty decreased as a percentage of income between 2022 and 2023 (*see Table 3b*). In 37 states, copayments remained the same as a percentage of income. In eight states, copayments increased as a percentage of income.

In 23 states, copayments for a family of three at 100 percent of poverty decreased as a percentage of income between 2001 and 2023. In 10 states, copayments remained the same as a percentage of income. In 18 states, copayments increased as a percentage of income.

In 11 states, the copayment for a family of three at 150 percent of poverty was above $218 per month (7 percent of income) in 2023. This includes four states where the copayment for a family at this income level was $311 per month (10 percent of income) or higher.

In five states, the copayment for a family of three at 100 percent of poverty was above $145 per month (7 percent of income) in 2023. This includes two states where the copayment for a family at this income level was $207 per month (10 percent of income) or higher.

PROVIDER PAYMENT RATES

States set payment rates for child care providers who care for children receiving child care assistance. The payment rate is a ceiling on the amount the state will pay providers, and a provider will be paid at that rate if the fee the provider charges to parents who pay out of their own pocket (private-paying parents) is equal to or greater than the rate. If a provider charges private-paying parents a fee that is below the payment rate, states typically pay the provider an amount equal to the private-pay fee; new regulations encourage states to pay the full state rate, regardless of the fee the provider charges private-paying parents.[48] Payment rates may vary by geographic region, age of the child, type of care, and other factors.

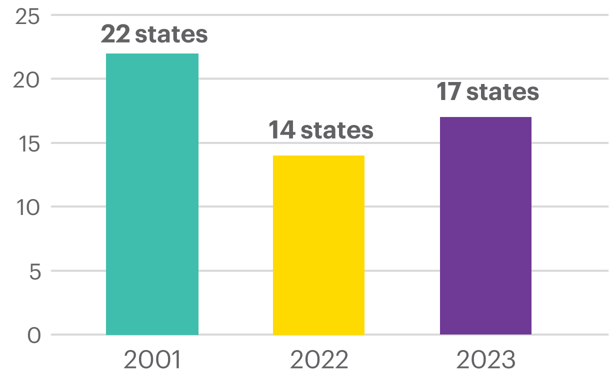
Payment rates help determine whether child care providers have the resources to support salaries and benefits that are sufficient to attract, retain, and offer financial security to child care teachers; low child-staff ratios that enable children to receive one-on-one attention; facilities that are safe and suited to children's needs; and materials and supplies for activities that encourage children's learning and development. Inadequate payment rates can discourage high-quality providers from enrolling families who receive child care assistance. Providers that do enroll these families can be deprived of the resources needed to offer high-quality care to children and fair compensation to child care teachers—and these providers can sometimes find it impossible to even keep their doors open.

Approximately two-fifths of the states increased their payment rates between 2022 and 2023. Still, in 2023, only one-third of the states set their payment rates at or above the federally recommended level—the 75th percentile of current market rates,[49] a rate that is designed to allow families access to 75 percent of the providers in their communities. Although more states set their payment rates at or above the 75th percentile of current market rates in 2023 than in 2022, there were still fewer states setting payment rates at the recommended level in 2023 than in 2001.[50]

The federal benchmark of the 75th percentile itself is insufficient, since it reflects a broken market in which the prices providers are able to charge do not cover the costs of offering high-quality care and fairly compensating teachers and staff. The federal regulations for CCDBG offer states the alternative of setting rates based on the estimated cost of providing child care—taking into account the expenses for adequate salaries for child care teachers, facilities, supplies and materials, and other costs. States that take this approach—as three states were doing as of 2023—should take care to design and implement their cost estimation methodology to ensure it results in a substantial boost in payment rates, incorporates the full set of costs of providing care, and reflects variations in costs by the age of the child, geographic location, and other factors.

Seventeen states set their payment rates at or above the 75th percentile of current market rates (rates from 2021 or 2022) in 2023 (*see Table 4a*),[51] higher than the 14 states that set their payment rates at this level in 2022, but lower than the 22 states that set their payment rates at this level in 2001 (*see Table 4b*).

Number of States with Provider Payment Rates at or above the 75th Percentile of Current Market Rates



Three states set their payment rates based on child care cost estimation models in 2023.[52]

Approximately two-fifths of the states increased their payment rates between 2022 and 2023.

One state, rather than paying providers based on set payment rates, paid each provider an amount equal to the published fees that the provider charged to private-paying parents in 2023.[53]

Forty-six states increased at least some of their payment rates between 2021 and 2023,[54] including 21 states that increased their rates between 2022 and 2023.[55] Two states reduced their rates between 2021 and 2023.[56] The remaining three states did not update their payment rates between 2021 and 2023. All states updated their payment rates between 2001 and 2023.

- Among states that increased their base payment rates for center care for a 4-year-old between 2022 and 2023, the average increase was $150 per month per child (*see Table 4c*).
- Among states that increased their base payment rates for center care for a 1-year-old between 2022 and 2023, the average increase was $177 per month per child.

In seven states, payment rates for center care for a 4-year-old in 2023 were at least 20 percent below the 75th percentile of market rates (based on the state's most recent market survey for which it reported data) for this type of care (*see Table 4d*).[57]

In five states, payment rates for center care for a 1-year-old in 2023 were at least 20 percent below the 75th percentile of market rates (based on the state's most recent market survey for which it reported data) for this type of care.

In seven states, payment rates for center care for a 4-year-old in 2023 were at least $200 per month below the 75th percentile of market rates (based on the state's most recent market survey for which it reported data) for this type of care. With a gap of $200 per month per child, a classroom of 20 4-year-olds receiving child care assistance would get $48,000 less per year than it would if the payment rate was at the recommended level.

In nine states, payment rates for center care for a 1-year-old in 2023 were at least $200 per month below the 75th percentile of market rates (based on the state's most recent market survey for which it reported data) for this type of care.

Seventeen states set their payment rates at or above the 75th percentile of current market rates in 2023: Alabama, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, North Dakota, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Forty-one states had higher payment rates (tiered rates) for child care providers that met higher-quality standards in 2023,[58] the same number of states as in 2022.[59] Some states had a single higher payment rate; other states had progressively higher payment rates for progressively higher levels of quality. Tiered payment rates can offer child care providers incentives and support to improve the quality of their care. However, it is important for the differential to be large enough to cover the additional costs entailed in raising quality sufficiently to qualify for a higher rate. These costs include expenses for additional staff to reduce child-staff ratios, increased salaries for teachers with advanced education in early childhood development, teacher training and professional development, facilities upgrades, and/or new equipment and materials. Yet, in over one-third of states with tiered rates, the highest rate fell below the 75th percentile of current market rates. And in over one-third of the states with tiered rates, the highest payment rate was less than 20 percent above the base rate.

Forty-one states paid higher rates for higher-quality care in 2023, the same number of states as in 2022 (*see Table 4e*).[60] While most of these states had tiered rates that applied across different age groups, one state only paid tiered rates for providers caring for children from 2 years of age to kindergarten entry,[61] and one state only paid tiered rates for providers caring for children up to 2.9 years of age.[62]

Six of the 41 states with tiered rates in 2023 had two rate levels (including the base level),[63] eight states had three levels, 14 states had four levels, 10 states had five levels, one state had six levels, one state had seven levels, and one state had eight levels.[64]

In over one-third of the 40 states with tiered rates for center care for a 4-year-old in 2023, the payment rate for this type of care at the highest quality level was below the 75th percentile of current market rates (which includes providers at all levels of quality) for this type of care.[65]

- In 14 of the 40 states, the payment rate at the highest quality level was below the 75th percentile of market rates (based on the state's most recent market survey for which it reported data).[66] In seven of these states, the payment rate at the highest quality level was at least 10 percent below the 75th percentile.
- In two of the 40 states, the payment rate at the highest quality level was equal to the 75th percentile of market rates.
- In 23 of the 40 states, the payment rate at the highest quality level was above the 75th percentile of market rates. In 15 of these states, the payment rate at the highest quality level was at least 10 percent above the 75th percentile.
- In one of the 40 states, it is not possible to compare the payment rate at the highest quality level to the 75th percentile of market rates.[67]

Among the 40 states with tiered rates for center care for a 4-year-old, the difference between a state's lowest rate and highest rate for this type of care ranged from 6 percent to 137 percent in 2023.[68] The difference between a state's lowest and highest rates was not consistently related to whether the state's highest rate was above or below the 75th percentile of market rates (based on the state's most recent market survey for which it reported data).

- In four of the 40 states, the highest rate was 5 percent to 9 percent greater than the lowest rate. In one of these four states, the highest rate was below the 75th percentile of market rates.
- In 11 of the 40 states, the highest rate was 10 percent to 19 percent greater than the lowest rate. In one of these 11 states, the highest rate was below the 75th percentile of market rates.
- In 14 of the 40 states, the highest rate was 20 percent to 29 percent greater than the lowest rate. In eight of these 14 states, the highest rate was below the 75th percentile of market rates.
- In 11 of the 40 states, the highest rate was at least 30 percent greater than the lowest rate. In four of these 11 states, the highest rate was below the 75th percentile of market rates.

In five states, the percentage differential between the lowest and highest rates for center care for a 4-year-old was greater in 2023 than in 2022.[69] In six states, the percentage differential between the lowest and highest rates was smaller in 2023 than in 2022.[70] In the remaining 29 states with tiered rates for center care for a 4-year-old in both years, the differential between the lowest and highest rates was the same in 2023 as in 2022.

ELIGIBILITY FOR FAMILIES WITH PARENTS SEARCHING FOR A JOB

Child care assistance can help parents get or keep the child care they need while searching for an initial job or a new job. Parents can more readily start work if they can make their child care arrangements before they find a job rather than having to wait until after they find a job to make those arrangements. In addition, children can have greater stability if they can remain in the same child care arrangement without disruption when a parent loses one job and is searching for another job.

The CCDBG Act of 2014, which reauthorized (renewed and updated) the program, requires states to allow families receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it for at least three months while a parent searches for a job.[71] States had until at least September 30, 2016, to implement this provision,[72] and some states received waivers allowing them additional time beyond that to implement the provision.[73] Neither the law nor the federal regulations require states to allow families to qualify for and begin receiving child care assistance while a parent searches for a job.

In 2023, all 51 states allowed families receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it for at least some amount of time while a parent searched for a job, the same as in 2022. In addition, all states allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to at least three months or until the end of their eligibility period—policies that are consistent with the requirements of the CCDBG Act of 2014.

Eighteen states allowed families to qualify for and begin receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job in 2023, a decrease from 20 states in 2022.[74]

All 51 states allowed families receiving child care assistance to continue receiving it while a parent searched for a job for up to three months (or an equivalent amount of time), for up to 16 weeks, for up to 26 weeks, or until the end of their eligibility period in 2023, the same number of states as in 2022 (*see Table 5*). Three states increased the length of time they allowed families to continue receiving assistance while a parent searched for a job, and two states reduced the length of time they allowed families to continue receiving assistance while a parent searched for a job, between 2022 and 2023.

- One state allowed families to continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job until the end of the family's 24-month eligibility period in 2023. This state had allowed parents to continue

receiving child care assistance while searching for a job until the end of the family's 12-month eligibility period in 2022.

- One state allowed families to continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 90 days after the end of the family's 12-month eligibility period in 2023. This state had allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job until the end of the family's 12-month eligibility period in 2022.
- Thirteen states allowed families to continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job until the end of the family's 12-month eligibility period in 2023. One of these states had states allowed families to continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 90 days in 2022.
- One state allowed families to continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 26 weeks in 2023.
- One state allowed families to continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 16 weeks in 2023. This state had allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 26 weeks in 2022.
- Thirty-four states allowed families to continue receiving child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to three months or the equivalent (90 or 92 days, or 12 or 13 weeks) in 2023.[75] One of these states had allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job until the end of the family's 12-month eligibility period in 2022.

Eighteen states allowed families not receiving child care assistance to qualify for assistance while a parent searched for a job in 2023, a decrease from 20 states in 2022.

- One state allowed families to qualify to receive child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 24 months in 2023. This state had allowed parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 12 months in 2022.
- Two states allowed families to qualify to receive child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 12 months or the equivalent (53 weeks) in 2023, the same as in 2022.
- One state allowed families to qualify to receive child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 26 weeks in 2023, the same as in 2022.
- Eleven states allowed families to qualify to receive child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to three months or the equivalent (90 or 92 days or 13 weeks) in 2023, a decrease from 13 states that did so in 2022.
- One state allowed families to receive child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 30 days while their application was being processed in 2023, the same as in 2022.
- One state allowed families to qualify to receive child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 240 hours, and one state allowed families to qualify to receive child care assistance while a parent searched for a job for up to 150 hours, in 2023, the same as in 2022.

One state permitted localities to determine whether families not receiving child care assistance could qualify for assistance while a parent searched for a job in 2023, the same as in 2022.

Thirty-two states did not allow families not receiving child care assistance to qualify for assistance while a parent searched for a job in 2023, an increase from 30 states in 2022.[76]

LOOKING AHEAD: POLICY CHANGES SINCE FEBRUARY 2023

Although this report primarily focuses on changes between February 2022 and February 2023, states reported on some changes they made after February 2023. According to preliminary information, nearly three-fifths of the states made progress on one or more of the policies covered in this report after February 2023.[77] Yet nearly one-quarter of the states took steps backward on one or more of these policies after February 2023—and additional states may make cuts as federal relief funding comes to an end. Sustained, substantial new investments will be needed to ensure all states make progress on their child care assistance policies.

At least 29 states made positive changes to one or more of their key child care assistance policies after February 2023. For example:

- At least nine states increased their income eligibility limits to qualify for child care assistance, beyond inflation.[78]
- At least one state reduced copayments for families receiving child care assistance.[79]
- At least 26 states increased base and/or tiered payment rates for some or all categories of child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance.[80]
- At least two states began allowing families to initially qualify for child care assistance while a parent searches for a job.[81]

At least 12 states made negative changes to one or more of their key child care assistance policies after February 2023.[82] For example:

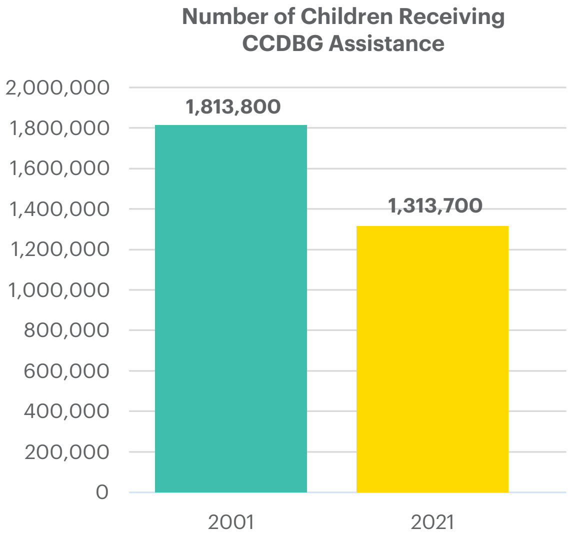
- At least one state reduced its income eligibility limit to qualify for child care assistance.[83]
- At least two states began placing families who applied for child care assistance on waiting lists.[84]
- At least nine states stopped waiving copayments for all families.[85]
- At least two states discontinued temporary increases in base and/or tiered payment rates for child care providers.[86]

CONCLUSION

Thirty-three states made improvements in one or more key child care assistance policies covered in this report between February 2022 and February 2023. These states with policy improvements increased income limits beyond inflation adjustments, reduced or eliminated waiting lists, lowered copayments as a percentage of family income, increased provider payment rates, increased the amount of time families already receiving child care assistance could continue receiving it while a parent searched for a job, and/or began allowing families to qualify for child care assistance while a parent searched for a job *(see box on the following page)*.

While some of these positive changes were significant, other changes were relatively minor. And fewer states made improvements between February 2022 and February 2023 than they did between February 2021 and February 2022—when 48 states made improvements in one or more key child care assistance policies[87]—or between February 2020 and February 2021—when 40 states made improvements.[88] In addition, as pandemic relief funding for child care began to expire, 19 states took steps backward on one or more of their key child care assistance policies between February 2022 and February 2023.[89] States could fall back even further as the remainder of pandemic relief child care funding runs out.

Even with the improvements that have been made in child care assistance policies, too many states still have low income limits, long waiting lists, high copayments, and/or inadequate payment rates—and too many children and families are unable to receive the child care assistance they need. Many families who are eligible for child care assistance under federal eligibility criteria do not receive assistance because they are turned away by state eligibility criteria that are more restrictive than federal criteria, placed on waiting lists, discouraged from applying for assistance by long waiting lists, or unaware that assistance is even available. Only one in six children eligible for child care assistance under federal law received it in 2020 (the most recent year for which data are available).[90] And 500,000 fewer children were receiving child care assistance through CCDBG in 2021 (the most recent year for which these data are available) than in 2001.[91]



The over $50 billion provided for child care through CARES, CRRSA, and ARPA offered crucial support to families and child care educators through the pandemic. But with the expiration of those funds, it is essential to make significant, long-term investments in child care. While a number of states have made their own investments in child care as the federal funding has expired,[92] federal investment is crucial to reach families and child care programs in all communities across the country. A well-funded child care system that provides families with equitable access to affordable, high-quality child care and the child care workforce with fair compensation would benefit children, families, early educators, and the nation's economy.

Summary of Improvements in Key State Child Care Assistance Policies

February 2022 to February 2023

Fourteen states increased their income eligibility limits to qualify for child care assistance by more than a one-year adjustment for inflation: Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, and West Virginia.

But two states reduced their income eligibility limits to qualify for child care assistance as a dollar amount: Georgia and Montana.

Six states reduced the number of children and families on their waiting lists for child care assistance, or eliminated their waiting lists and began serving all eligible families who applied for child care assistance: Colorado, Florida, Indiana, New York, North Carolina, and Virginia.

But four states increased the number of children and families on their waiting lists for child care assistance, or began placing families on a waiting list for child care assistance: Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and Texas.

Eight states reduced copayments, as a percentage of income, for child care assistance for families with incomes at 100 percent of poverty and/or families with incomes at 150 percent of poverty: Arizona, Florida, Kentucky, Maryland, Nevada, Texas, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

But 10 states increased copayments, as a percentage of income, for child care assistance for families with incomes at 100 percent of poverty and/or families with incomes at 150 percent of poverty: Alaska, Hawai'i, Illinois, Indiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Rhode Island, Utah, and Virginia.

Twenty-three states increased at least some of their base and/or tiered payment rates for child care providers: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington.

But four states reduced at least some of their base and/or tiered payment rates for child care providers: District of Columbia, Hawai'i, Kansas, and Michigan.

Three states increased the amount of time families receiving child care assistance could continue receiving it while a parent searched for a job: California, Maryland, and Tennessee.

But four states reduced the amount of time families receiving child care assistance could continue receiving it while a parent searched for a job and/or stopped allowing families to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job: Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, and North Dakota.

ENDNOTES

1 Research demonstrates the important role that high-quality child care plays in giving children a strong start. Eric Dearing, Kathleen McCartney, and Beck A. Taylor, Does Higher Quality Early Child Care Promote Low-Income Children's Math and Reading Achievement in Middle Childhood?, Child Development, 80 (5), 2009, 1329-1349; National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine, From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2000); Ellen S. Peisner-Feinberg, Richard M. Clifford, Mary L. Culkin, Carollee Howes, Sharon Lynn Kagan, et al., The Children of the Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study Go to School (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, 1999); Suzanne Helburn, Mary L. Culkin, Carollee Howes, Donna Bryant, Richard Clifford, Debby Cryer, Ellen Peisner-Feinberg, and Sharon Lynn Kagan, Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers (Denver, CO: University of Colorado, 1995).

2 In 2022 (the most recent year for which data are available), 5.22 million families with children under age 6 (34.3 percent) had incomes under 200 percent of poverty. U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2023 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Detailed Table POV06. Families With Related Children Under 6 by Number of Working Family Members and Family Structure: 2022, *available at* https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pov/pov-06.html.

3 Child Care Aware of America, Child Care at a Standstill: 2023 Affordability Analysis (Arlington, VA: Child Care Aware of America, 2023), Appendix Tables I and II, *available at* https://info.childcareaware.org/hubfs/2023_Affordability_Analysis.pdf.

4 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2023: Childcare Workers (2024), *available at* https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes399011.htm.

5 Yoonjeon Kim, Lea J.E. Austin, and Hopeton Hess, The Multilayered Effects of Racism on Early Educators in California: An Examination of Disparities in Wages, Leadership Roles, and Education (Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2024), *available at* https://cscce.berkeley.edu/publications/report/effects-of-racism-on-california-early-educators/; Brooke LePage, The Child Care and Early Learning Workforce Is Underpaid and Women Are Paying the Price (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2023), *available at* https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/child-care-workers-5.25.23v3.pdf; Lea J.E. Austin, Bethany Edwards, Raúl Chávez, and Marcy Whitebook, Racial Wage Gaps in Early Education Employment (Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2019), *available at* https://cscce.berkeley.edu/racial-wage-gaps-in-early-education-employment/.

6 This amount includes $8.021 billion in discretionary funding and $3.550 billion in mandatory (entitlement) funding. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget in Brief (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2024), 129, 137, *available at* https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fy-2025-budget-in-brief.pdf.

7 This amount includes $6.165 billion in discretionary funding and $3.550 billion in mandatory (entitlement) funding. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget in Brief (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022), 121, 129, *available at* https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fy-2023-budget-in-brief.pdf.

8 National Women's Law Center calculations using Congressional Budget Office, The Budget and Economic Outlook report series; figures are adjusted for inflation using the average of the Consumer Price Index and the Employment Cost Index.

9 Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, Pub. L. No. 115–31, 131 Stat. 532 (2017).

10 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Pub. L. No. 111–5, 123 Stat. 178 (2009).

11 This amount includes $2.127 billion in discretionary funding, $2.917 billion in mandatory (entitlement) funding, and $1 billion in ARRA funding (assuming that the additional $2 billion in CCDBG funding for states to obligate in FY 2009 and FY 2010 provided through ARRA allowed for $1 billion in ARRA funds each year for FY 2009 and FY 2010). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Fiscal Year 2011 Budget in Brief (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010), 75, 79, *available at* https://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/asfr/budget/budgets-in-brief-performance-reports/index.html.

12 National Women's Law Center calculations using Congressional Budget Office, The Budget and Economic Outlook report series; figures are adjusted for inflation using the average of the Consumer Price Index and the Employment Cost Index.

13 CCDBG funding in FY 2002, before adjusting for inflation, was $4.817 billion. This amount includes $2.1 billion in discretionary funding and $2.717 billion in mandatory (entitlement) funding. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, FY 2003 President's Budget for HHS (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2002), 83, 92, *available at* https://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/asfr/budget/budgets-in-brief-performance-reports/index.html. Inflation adjustment calculated by National Women's Law Center using Congressional Budget Office, The Budget and Economic Outlook report series; figures are adjusted for inflation using the average of the Consumer Price Index and the Employment Cost Index.

14 This total includes $976 million transferred to CCDBG and $1.326 billion spent directly on child care (including both that categorized as "assistance" and "non-assistance"). National Women's Law Center analysis of data from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, Fiscal Year 2022 TANF Financial Data, Table A.1.: Federal TANF and State MOE Expenditures Summary by ACF-196 Spending Category, FY 2022, *available at* https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/data/tanf-financial-data-fy-2022.

15 This total includes $2.413 billion transferred to CCDBG, $353 million spent on child care categorized as "assistance," and $1.200 billion spent on child care categorized as "non-assistance." National Women's Law Center analysis of data from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Fiscal Year 2000 TANF Financial Data, Table A. Combined Federal Funds Spent in FY 2000 Through the Fourth Quarter, *retrieved from* http://archive.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/data/tanf_2000.html.

16 National Women's Law Center calculations using Congressional Budget Office, The Budget and Economic Outlook report series; figures are adjusted for inflation using the average of the Consumer Price Index and the Employment Cost Index.

17 In FY 2001, CCDBG funding was $4.567 billion ($8.171 billion in FY 2023 dollars) and TANF funding used for child care was $3.541 billion ($6.336 billion in FY 2023 dollars). The CCDBG funding amount includes $2.0 billion in discretionary funding and $2.567 billion in mandatory (entitlement) funding. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, FY 2002 President's Budget for HHS (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001), 89-90, *available at* https://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/asfr/budget/budgets-in-brief-performance-reports/index.html. The TANF funding amount includes $1.899 billion transferred to CCDBG, $285 million spent on child care categorized as "assistance," and $1.357 billion spent on child care categorized as "non-assistance." National Women's Law Center analysis of data from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Fiscal Year 2001 TANF Financial Data, Table A. Combined Federal Funds Spent in FY 2001 Through the Fourth Quarter, *retrieved from* http://archive.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/data/tanf_2001.html. CCDBG and TANF amounts in FY 2023 dollars calculated by National Women's Law Center using Congressional Budget Office, The Budget and Economic Outlook report series; figures are adjusted for inflation using the average of the Consumer Price Index and the Employment Cost Index.

18 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, Pub. L. No. 116-136, 134 Stat. 557-558 (2020).

19 Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260, 134 Stat. 1914 (2020).

20 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-2, 135 Stat. 31, 207 (2021).

21 This report focuses on the income criteria used to determine a family's eligibility when it first applies for assistance because this traditionally has been used as the measure of access to benefit programs and determines whether a family can enter the program. However, many states allow families to continue to receive assistance up to a higher income level than the initial eligibility limit. Information about states that have different entrance and exit income eligibility limits is provided in the notes to Tables 1a and 1b.

22 Comparable data were not collected for 2001.

23 Comparable data were not collected for 2001.

24 For Colorado, which allows counties to set their income limits within state guidelines, the maximum allowable income limit is used for the analysis in this report. For Texas, which allowed local workforce development boards to set their income limits within a state-specified range until October 2022, the maximum of that range is used for the analysis in this report. For Virginia, which had three different income limits for each of three different regions in 2001, the highest regional income limit in that year is used for the analysis in this report; for 2022 and 2023, when Virginia had four regional income limits that applied to families with children ages 5 and older and a higher statewide income limit that applied to families with children under age 5, the statewide income limit for families with young children is used for the analysis in this report. For North Carolina, which since 2014 has had a higher income limit for families with children through age 5 than for families with older children, the higher income limit is used for the analysis in this report.

25 State median income is not used to measure inflation between 2001 and 2023 because variations among states in state median income adjustments and in the benchmark states use to set their income eligibility limits are more difficult to track than changes in the federal poverty level over a long-term period.

26 These nine states include Colorado (which increased its income limit from 265 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level to 270 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), Illinois (which increased its income limit from 200 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level to 225 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), Kentucky (which increased its income limit from 200 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level to 85 percent of the 2021 state median income), Maryland (which increased its income limit from 65 percent of the 2018 state median income to 70 percent of the 2023 state median income), Michigan (which increased its income limit from 185 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level to 200 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), New Mexico (which increased its income limit from 350 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level to 400 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), New York (which increased its income limit from 200 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level to 300 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), Rhode Island (which increased its income limit from 180 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level to 200 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), and Vermont (which increased its income limit from 300 percent of the 2020 federal poverty level to 350 percent of the 2023 federal poverty level). In most instances, the states included in the counts referenced in the text of this report are discernible from the tables following the endnotes. When the states are not easily discernible from the tables, the endnotes identify the states referenced.

27 These 31 states include 17 states (Alabama, Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Wyoming) that set their income limits based on the federal poverty level and adjusted their income limits for the 2022 federal poverty level; two states (South Carolina and Wisconsin) that set their income limits based on the federal poverty level and adjusted their income limits for the 2023 federal poverty level; one state (Washington) that set its income limit based on state median income and adjusted its income limit for the 2022 state median income; and 11 states (California, Connecticut, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia) that set their income limits based on state median income and adjusted their income limits for the 2023 state median income between February 2022 and February 2023.

28 These five states include one state (Alaska) that set its income limit based on state median income and adjusted its income limit from the 2019 to 2021 state median income, and four states (Arkansas, Maine, Utah, and West Virginia) that set their income limits based on state median income and adjusted their income limits from the 2021 to 2023 state median income between February 2022 and February 2023.

29 These four states are the District of Columbia, Hawai'i, Indiana, and Mississippi.

30 These two states are Georgia (which reduced its income limit from 85 percent of the 2022 state median income to 50 percent of the 2023 state median income) and Montana (which reduced its income limit from 185 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level to 150 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level).

31 For the purposes of this analysis, state income limits in 2023 are calculated as a percentage of the 2022 federal poverty level, because most states that set their income limits based on the federal poverty level had not yet updated their income limits for the 2023 federal poverty level by February 2023. State income limits in 2001 are calculated as a percentage of the 2001 federal poverty level because most states that set their income limits based on the federal poverty level had updated their income limits for the 2001 federal poverty level by June 2001. The federal poverty level for a family of three was $14,630 in 2001, $23,030 in 2022, and $24,860 in 2023. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Prior HHS Poverty Guidelines and Federal Register References, *available at* https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references.

32 These six states include one state in which the income limit decreased by two percentage points, three states in which the income limit had no percentage point change, and two states in which the income limit increased by one percentage point as a percentage of the federal poverty level.

33 For the purposes of this analysis, state income limits in 2023 are calculated as a percentage of the 2022 federal poverty level, because most states that set their income limits based on the federal poverty level had not yet updated their income limits for the 2023 federal poverty level by February 2023.

34 For a family of three, 150 percent of poverty was equal to $34,545 a year in 2022 and $37,290 a year in 2023.

35 For a family of three, 200 percent of poverty was equal to $46,060 a year in 2022 and $49,720 a year in 2023.

36 National Women's Law Center analysis of data from Zane Mokhiber, Elise Gould, and Katherine deCourcy, Family Budget Calculator (Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, 2024), *available at* https://www.epi.org/resources/budget/; and from Sylvia Allegretto, Basic Family Budgets: Working Families' Incomes Often Fail to Meet Living Expenses Around the U.S. (Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, 2005), *available at* http://www.epi.org/page/-/old/briefingpapers/165/bp165.pdf.

37 *See,* e.g., Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, In Their Own Voices: Parents and Providers Struggling with Child Care Cuts (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2005), 10; Children's Action Alliance, The Real Reality of Arizona's Working Families—Child Care Survey Highlights (Phoenix, AZ: Children's Action Alliance, 2004); Deborah Schlick, Mary Daly, and Lee Bradford, Faces on the Waiting List: Waiting for Child Care Assistance in Ramsey County (Ramsey County, MN: Ramsey County Human Services, 1999) (Survey conducted by the Minnesota Center for Survey Research at the University of Minnesota); Philip Coltoff, Myrna Torres, and Natasha Lifton, The Human Cost of Waiting for Child Care: A Study (New York, NY: Children's Aid Society, 1999); Jennifer Gulley and Ann Hilbig, Waiting List Survey: Gulf Coast Workforce Development Area (Houston, TX: Neighborhood Centers, Inc., 1999); Jeffrey D. Lyons, Susan D. Russell, Christina Gilgor, and Amy H. Staples, Child Care Subsidy: The Costs of Waiting (Chapel Hill, NC: Day Care Services Association, 1998); Casey Coonerty and Tamsin Levy, Waiting for Child Care: How Do Parents Adjust to Scarce Options in Santa Clara County? (Berkeley, CA: Policy Analysis for California Education, 1998); Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, et al., Use of Subsidized Child Care by Philadelphia Families (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, 1997); Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, Valuing Families: The High Cost of Waiting for Child Care Sliding Fee Assistance (Minneapolis, MN: Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, 1995).

38 Waiting lists are not a perfect measure of unmet need, however. For example, waiting lists may increase due to expanded outreach efforts that make more families aware of child care assistance programs, and may decrease due to a state's adoption of more restrictive eligibility criteria.

39 These states include Georgia, which is characterized in this report as having frozen intake in 2022 and 2023, even though the state no longer refers to its policy as frozen intake, because in February 2022 and February 2023 it did not serve otherwise eligible families unless they met the state's priority criteria (families participating in TANF, children with disabilities, grandparents raising grandchildren, children with court-ordered supervision, children receiving protective services, foster children, parents ages 20 or younger, families lacking regular and adequate housing, families experiencing domestic violence, families with children participating in the state-funded prekindergarten program, families experiencing state- or federally declared natural disasters, and families with very low incomes).

40 These figures do not include waiting list totals for California or New York because they had local waiting lists and did not provide statewide waiting list totals for 2023, 2022, and/or 2001. These figures also do not include waiting list totals for Georgia because the state provided a waiting list total only for 2001, and did not provide comparable data for 2023 or 2022, when the state only served families that met its priority criteria, and turned away all other eligible families without placing them on a waiting list. Also note that for Minnesota, which only reported the number of families—not children—on its waiting lists in 2023 and 2022, the National Women's Law Center estimated the number of children on the state's waiting list from the number of families based on the ratio between the number of children receiving assistance and the number of families receiving assistance, calculated from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care, FY 2021 Preliminary Data Table 1 - Average Monthly Adjusted Number of Families and Children Served, *available at* https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/data/fy-2021-preliminary-data-table-1.

41 If a state determines its copayments based on the cost of care, this report assumes that the family had a 4-year-old in a licensed center charging the state's maximum base payment rate. If a state allows localities to set their copayments within a state-specified range, the maximum level allowed by the state and/or in effect in a locality is used for the analysis in this report.

42 Child Care and Development Fund (Preamble to Final Rule), 81 Fed. Reg. 190 (September 30, 2016), *available at* https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/09/30/2016-22986/child-care-and-development-fund-program.

43 Improving Child Care Access, Affordability, and Stability in the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), 89 Fed. Reg. 15,414 (March 1, 2024) (to be codified at 45 C.F.R. § 98.45), *available at* https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/01/2024-04139/improving-child-care-access-affordability-and-stability-in-the-child-care-and-development-fund-ccdf.

44 U.S. Census Bureau, Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: 2011, Detailed Tables, Table 6: Average Weekly Child Care Expenditures of Families with Employed Mothers that Make Payments, by Age Groups and Selected Characteristics: Spring 2011 (2013), *available at* http://www.census.gov/data/tables/2008/demo/2011-tables.html.

45 For a family of three, 150 percent of the federal poverty level was equal to an income of $34,545 in 2022 and $37,290 in 2023.

46 This state is Idaho. While families with incomes at 150 percent of poverty could not qualify for child care assistance in five other states (Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, and Ohio) in 2022, and six other states (Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Montana, Missouri, and Ohio) in 2023, families already receiving assistance could continue receiving assistance—and thus have copayments—up to an exit eligibility limit above 150 percent of poverty in all of these other states in 2022 and 2023.

47 For a family of three, 150 percent of the federal poverty level was equal to an income of $21,945 in 2001.

48 Improving Child Care Access, Affordability, and Stability in the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) (Preamble to Final Rule), 89 Fed. Reg. 15,370-1 (March 1, 2024).

49 This recommendation to set payment rates at the 75th percentile of current market rates is in the preamble to both regulations issued in 1998, *see* Child Care and Development Fund (Preamble to Final Rule), 63 Fed. Reg. 142 (July 24, 1998), *available at* http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-1998-07-24/pdf/98-19418.pdf, and the regulations issued in September 2016, *see* Child Care and Development Fund (Preamble to Final Rule), 81 Fed. Reg. 190 (September 30, 2016). Under the CCDBG Act of 2014, which codified the ways in which states must set payment rates, states must set their rates using a market rate survey or alternative methodology that they have "developed and conducted (not earlier than 2 years before the date of the submission of the application containing the State plan)." Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, Pub. L. 113-186, 128 Stat. 1971, 1985-1986 (2014). Since the law also requires states to submit their plans only once every three years, Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, Pub. L. 113-186, 128 Stat. 1971, 1972 (2014), the effect of the statutory language is to permit rates to be set based on a market rate survey older than two years. However, this report, as in previous years, considers rates to be current only if based on a market rate survey conducted no more than two years earlier.

50 For this analysis, a state's payment rates are not considered to be at the 75th percentile of market rates if only some of its rates—for example, for certain regions, age groups, or higher-quality care—are at the 75th percentile.

51 Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington are not counted as setting their payment rates at the 75th percentile of current market rates in 2023, even though each of these states had some payment rates for providers at the most common quality level—including one or both of the rates shown in Table 4d—that were at or above the 75th percentile of market rates, because each state also had payment rates for other age groups or at other quality levels that fell below the 75th percentile. South Carolina and Vermont are also not counted as setting their payment rates at the 75th percentile of current market rates; their base rates were set at the 75th percentile of outdated market rates, but it cannot be determined if their rates were at or above the 75th percentile of current market rates (market rates from 2021, 2022, or 2023) because data from more recent market surveys were not available for these states. Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Michigan are counted as setting their payment rates at or above the 75th percentile, even though they did not provide data from a current market rate survey, because they set their base payment rates substantially above the 75th percentile of 2020 market rates.

52 These three states are the District of Columbia, New Mexico, and Virginia.

53 This state is Georgia.

54 These 46 states are Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Most of these states are included because they increased their rates for all categories of care, but a few of these states only increased certain rates. Florida is included because some of its local early learning coalitions—which set rates and determine when to update them—increased their rates. States are generally not included here if they increased only their higher rates for higher-quality care (tiered rates) and not their base rates; see endnotes 69 and 70 and accompanying text for discussion of changes in tiered rates. However, North Carolina, which increased rates only for providers with three stars or higher in the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has five levels), is included here because the state requires all providers serving families receiving child care assistance (except religious-sponsored providers and providers with a temporary license) to have a rating of three stars or higher. Differences between rates shown in Table 4d of this report and rates shown in Table 4d of the State Child Care Assistance Policies 2021 or 2022 reports for any states other than those identified in this and the following two endnotes are due to revisions or recalculations of the data or changes in the category for which data are reported rather than policy changes.

55 These 21 states are Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington.

56 These two states are the District of Columbia and Hawai'i. Kansas and Michigan reduced some or all of their rates between 2022 and 2023, but their rates were still higher in 2023 than in 2021.

57 This analysis is based on rates in each state's most populous city, county, or region. For states that pay higher rates for higher-quality care, this analysis uses the state's most common payment rate level (the level representing the greatest number of providers). Also note that states were asked to report the 75th percentile of market rates based on their most recent market rate survey, and most states reported data from 2021 or more recent surveys. However, 11 states reported data from surveys conducted before 2021. In these 11 states, payment rates were less than 20 percent below the 75th percentile of market rates—and, in some cases, above the 75th percentile—based on their outdated surveys; it is not possible to calculate whether their payment rates were 20 percent or more below the 75th percentile of current market rates.

58 This analysis is based on tiered rates in each state's most populous city, county, or region. Within each state, the use and structure of tiered rates may vary across cities, counties, or regions.

59 Comparable data on tiered rates were not collected for 2001.

60 These 41 states do not include New York, which offers local districts the option of paying a rate that is 15 percent higher than the base rate for accredited care, because the region for which the state reported data, New York City, did not offer this tiered rate in 2022 or 2023.

61 This state is Hawai'i.

62 This state is Massachusetts.

63 This analysis is based on the number of different rate levels, not the number of quality levels. The base rate refers to the lowest rate level, regardless of whether the base level is incorporated into the state's quality rating and improvement system (for example, a base rate that is the initial one-star rate in a five-star rating system) or is not a level of the quality rating and improvement system (for example, a base rate that is the rate for providers not participating in a voluntary five-star rating system).

64 Between 2022 and 2023, Oklahoma increased the number of its rate levels from four to five, Delaware reduced the number of its rate levels (except for some rate categories) from four to three, and Vermont reduced the number of its rate levels from six to five.

65 Massachusetts is not included in this analysis because it does not have higher rates for higher-quality care for 4-year-olds. The state's highest rate for center care for a 1-year-old was 11 percent below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.

66 These 14 states include Florida, Hawai'i, North Carolina, and Oklahoma, each of which determined a separate 75th percentile of market rates for child care providers at separate quality levels. In Florida, Hawai'i, and North Carolina, the payment rate at the highest quality level was below the 75th percentile for each of the quality levels for which each state collected data. In Oklahoma, the payment rate at the highest quality level (the five-star level) was below the 75th percentile for the highest quality level in effect at the time of the survey (the three-star level), but equal to the 75th percentile for two-star centers.

67 This state is Georgia, which pays the tiered rate on top of a base rate that is equal to the fee that the provider charges private-paying parents, regardless of the amount of the fee, rather than using a set base payment rate.

68 Massachusetts' highest rate for center care for a 1-year-old was 3 percent above its lowest rate for this type of care.

69 These five states are Arizona, Kentucky, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Rhode Island. In Arizona and Rhode Island, both the lowest and highest rates increased, but in Kentucky, North Carolina, and Oklahoma, the lowest rate remained the same, while the highest rate increased between 2022 and 2023.

70 These six states are Delaware, Hawai'i, Nevada, Oregon, Texas, and Vermont. In Nevada, Oregon, Texas, and Vermont, both the lowest and highest rates increased; in Delaware, the lowest rate increased while the highest rate remained approximately the same; and in Hawai'i, both the lowest and highest rates decreased.

71 Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, Pub. L. 113-186, 128 Stat. 1971, 1979 (2014).

72 The federal Office of Child Care allowed states until September 30, 2016, to implement provisions in the law for which an effective date is not specified, including this provision. *See* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care, Draft Child Care and Development Fund Plan Preprint for Public Comment, September 14, 2015, 5, *retrieved from* https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/occ/fy2016_2018_ccdf_plan_preprin_draft_for_public_comment_91415.pdf.

73 National Women's Law Center, Child Care and Development Fund Plans FY 2016-2018: State Waivers and Corrective Actions (2016), *available at* https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CCDF-State-Plans-FY-2016-2018-State-Waivers-and-Corrective-Actions-FINAL.pdf.

74 This analysis is based on policies for families not connected to the TANF program. Additional states allowed families receiving or transitioning from TANF to qualify for child care assistance while a parent searched for a job. See Table 5 notes for information about states that allowed families receiving or transitioning from TANF, and/or other specific categories of families, to qualify for child care assistance while a parent searched for a job.

75 Some of these states allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance for three months (or the equivalent) even if they reached the end of their eligibility period before the end of that three-month period for job search, while some of these states only allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance until the end of their eligibility period, even if the parent had not yet had a full three months to search for a job; see Table 5 notes for more details on each state's policy.

76 These 30 states include Connecticut and Missouri, which in 2022 generally did not allow parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job, but did allow parents to qualify for assistance while searching for a job if they had lost their previous job due to COVID; these states no longer allowed parents to qualify for assistance in this situation in 2023.

77 See notes after the tables for more details about state policy changes since February 2023.

78 These nine states are the District of Columbia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, and Vermont.

79 This state is New York.

80 These 26 states are Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and Wyoming.

81 These two states are Missouri and North Dakota.

82 Of these 12 states with negative changes to one or more key child care assistance policies, five states had positive changes to one or more other key child care assistance policies and are counted among the 29 states with positive changes.

83 This state is South Carolina.

84 These two states are Connecticut and Oregon.

85 These nine states are Alabama, California, Delaware, Georgia, Michigan, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Wyoming. (While California and Oklahoma no longer waive copayments for all families, California eliminated copayments for all families with incomes below 75 percent of state median income and Oklahoma started covering 50 percent of the reinstated copayments.)

86 These two states are Maine and Michigan.

87 Karen Schulman, Precarious Progress: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2022 (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2023), *available at* https://nwlc.org/resource/precarious-progress-state-child-care-assistance-policies-2022/.

88 Karen Schulman, At the Crossroads: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2021 (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2022), *available at* https://nwlc.org/resource/at-the-crossroads-state-child-care-assistance-policies-2021/.

89 Of these 19 states that took steps backward on one or more key child care assistance policies, 10 states had improvements in one or more other key child care assistance policies and are counted among the 33 states with improvements.

90 Nina Chien, Factsheet: Estimates of Child Care Eligibility and Receipt for Fiscal Year 2020 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Services Policy, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2024), *available at* https://aspe.hhs.gov/reports/estimates-child-care-eligibility-receipt-fy-2020.

91 National Women's Law Center calculations based on U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care, FY 2021 Preliminary Data Table 1 - Average Monthly Adjusted Number of Families and Children Served; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care, FY 2001 CCDF Data Tables and Charts, Table 1 - Child Care and Development Fund Average Monthly Adjusted Number of Families and Children Served, *available at* https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/data/fy-2001-ccdf-data-tables-and-charts.

92 Kyra Weber, Shelby Brunson, and Karen Schulman, State Child Care and Early Education Updates 2023: Continuing Progress (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2024), *available at* https://nwlc.org/resource/state-child-care-and-early-education-updates-2023-continuing-progress/.

TABLE 1A

Income Eligibility Limits for a Family of Three in 2022 and 2023

	INCOME LIMIT IN 2023			INCOME LIMIT IN 2022			CHANGE IN INCOME LIMIT 2022 TO 2023		
	As annual dollar amount	As percent of 2022 federal poverty level ($23,030 a year)	As percent of state median income	As annual dollar amount	As percent of 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year)	As percent of state median income	As annual dollar amount	As percent of poverty	As percent of state median income
Alabama*	$41,460	180%	59%	$39,528	180%	58%	$1,932	0%	1%
Alaska*	$74,304	323%	81%	$71,520	326%	82%	$2,784	-3%	-1%
Arizona*	$38,016	165%	53%	$36,240	165%	52%	$1,776	0%	0%
Arkansas	$53,161	231%	85%	$49,561	226%	83%	$3,600	5%	2%
California*	$82,102	357%	94%	$78,132	356%	94%	$3,970	1%	0%
Colorado*	$46,060-$62,181	200%-270%	49%-67%	$40,626-$58,194	185%-265%	46%-65%	$3,987-$5,434	5%-15%	2%-4%
Connecticut*	$64,230	279%	60%	$63,044	287%	60%	$1,186	-8%	0%
Delaware*	$42,624	185%	48%	$40,632	185%	47%	$1,992	0%	2%
District of Columbia*	$54,900	238%	43%	$54,900	250%	48%	$0	-12%	-5%
Florida*	$34,545	150%	49%	$32,940	150%	48%	$1,605	0%	1%
Georgia*	$37,772	164%	50%	$60,584	276%	85%	-$22,812	-112%	-35%
Hawai'i*	$70,404	306%	75%	$70,404	321%	77%	$0	-15%	-3%
Idaho*	$33,396	145%	49%	$31,848	145%	47%	$1,548	0%	1%
Illinois*	$51,816	225%	58%	$43,920	200%	51%	$7,896	25%	7%
Indiana*	$29,244	127%	39%	$29,244	133%	40%	$0	-6%	-1%
Iowa*	$33,396	145%	41%	$31,848	145%	40%	$1,548	0%	0%
Kansas*	$57,576	250%	74%	$54,900	250%	72%	$2,676	0%	2%
Kentucky*	$55,476	241%	80%	$43,920	200%	65%	$11,556	41%	15%
Louisiana	$59,592	259%	85%	$58,392	266%	85%	$1,200	-7%	0%
Maine*	$70,625	307%	85%	$64,380	293%	82%	$6,245	13%	3%
Maryland*	$75,627	328%	70%	$60,081	274%	57%	$15,546	55%	13%
Massachusetts*	$57,093	248%	50%	$55,126	251%	50%	$1,967	-3%	0%
Michigan*	$46,056	200%	57%	$40,632	185%	52%	$5,424	15%	5%
Minnesota*	$46,423	202%	47%	$44,589	203%	47%	$1,834	-1%	0%
Mississippi	$48,999	213%	82%	$48,999	223%	85%	$0	-10%	-2%
Missouri*	$34,548	150%	45%	$32,940	150%	44%	$1,608	0%	1%
Montana*	$34,548	150%	46%	$40,632	185%	55%	-$6,084	-35%	-10%
Nebraska*	$42,600	185%	53%	$40,632	185%	52%	$1,968	0%	1%
Nevada	$60,797	264%	85%	$58,908	268%	85%	$1,889	-4%	0%
New Hampshire*	$50,666	220%	48%	$48,312	220%	48%	$2,354	0%	1%
New Jersey*	$46,060	200%	41%	$43,920	200%	41%	$2,140	0%	1%
New Mexico*	$92,120	400%	154%	$76,860	350%	135%	$15,260	50%	20%
New York*	$69,090	300%	75%	$43,920	200%	50%	$25,170	100%	25%
North Carolina*	$46,056	200%	62%	$43,920	200%	62%	$2,136	0%	0%
North Dakota*	$76,452	332%	85%	$74,316	338%	85%	$2,136	-6%	0%
Ohio*	$32,703	142%	42%	$31,184	142%	41%	$1,519	0%	1%
Oklahoma*	$55,716	242%	85%	$54,360	248%	85%	$1,356	-6%	0%
Oregon*	$46,068	200%	55%	$43,920	200%	56%	$2,148	0%	-1%
Pennsylvania*	$46,060	200%	53%	$43,920	200%	52%	$2,140	0%	1%
Rhode Island*	$46,060	200%	50%	$39,528	180%	44%	$6,532	20%	7%
South Carolina*	$74,580	324%	106%	$69,090	315%	102%	$5,490	9%	4%
South Dakota*	$50,138	218%	65%	$47,813	218%	64%	$2,325	0%	1%
Tennessee*	$60,576	263%	85%	$57,672	263%	85%	$2,904	0%	0%
Texas*	$63,396	275%	85%	$60,962	278%	85%	$2,434	-2%	0%
Utah*	$69,288	301%	88%	$63,576	290%	84%	$5,712	11%	4%
Vermont*	$87,012	378%	102%	$65,160	297%	78%	$21,852	81%	24%
Virginia*	$81,454	354%	85%	$77,794	354%	85%	$3,660	-1%	0%
Washington*	$53,976	234%	57%	$51,288	234%	57%	$2,688	1%	0%
West Virginia	$56,271	244%	85%	$53,028	241%	82%	$3,243	3%	3%
Wisconsin*	$45,991	200%	53%	$42,606	194%	51%	$3,385	6%	2%
Wyoming*	$42,708	185%	52%	$40,836	186%	51%	$1,872	-1%	1%

TABLE 1B

Income Eligibility Limits for a Family of Three in 2001 and 2023

	INCOME LIMIT IN 2023			INCOME LIMIT IN 2001			CHANGE IN INCOME LIMIT 2001 TO 2023		
	As annual dollar amount	As percent of 2022 federal poverty level ($23,030 a year)	As percent of state median income	As annual dollar amount	As percent of 2001 federal poverty level ($14,630 a year)	As percent of state median income	As annual dollar amount	As percent of poverty	As percent of state median income
Alabama*	$41,460	180%	59%	$18,048	123%	41%	$23,412	57%	18%
Alaska*	$74,304	323%	81%	$44,328	303%	75%	$29,976	20%	5%
Arizona*	$38,016	165%	53%	$23,364	160%	52%	$14,652	5%	0%
Arkansas*	$53,161	231%	85%	$23,523	161%	60%	$29,638	70%	25%
California*	$82,102	357%	94%	$35,100	240%	66%	$47,002	117%	28%
Colorado*	$46,060-$62,181	200%-270%	49%-67%	$19,020-$32,000	130%-219%	36%-61%	$27,040-$30,181	51%-70%	6%-13%
Connecticut*	$64,230	279%	60%	$47,586	325%	75%	$16,644	-46%	-15%
Delaware*	$42,624	185%	48%	$29,260	200%	53%	$13,364	-15%	-5%
District of Columbia*	$54,900	238%	43%	$34,700	237%	66%	$20,200	1%	-23%
Florida*	$34,545	150%	49%	$20,820	142%	45%	$13,725	8%	5%
Georgia*	$37,772	164%	50%	$24,278	166%	50%	$13,494	-2%	0%
Hawai'i*	$70,404	306%	75%	$46,035	315%	83%	$24,369	-9%	-8%
Idaho*	$33,396	145%	49%	$20,472	140%	51%	$12,924	5%	-2%
Illinois*	$51,816	225%	58%	$24,243	166%	43%	$27,573	59%	15%
Indiana*	$29,244	127%	39%	$20,232	138%	41%	$9,012	-11%	-2%
Iowa*	$33,396	145%	41%	$19,812	135%	41%	$13,584	10%	0%
Kansas*	$57,576	250%	74%	$27,060	185%	56%	$30,516	65%	18%
Kentucky*	$55,476	241%	80%	$24,140	165%	55%	$31,336	76%	25%
Louisiana*	$59,592	259%	85%	$29,040	205%	75%	$30,552	54%	10%
Maine*	$70,625	307%	85%	$36,452	249%	75%	$34,173	58%	10%
Maryland*	$75,627	328%	70%	$25,140	172%	40%	$50,487	157%	30%
Massachusetts*	$57,093	248%	50%	$28,968	198%	48%	$28,125	50%	2%
Michigan*	$46,056	200%	57%	$26,064	178%	47%	$19,992	22%	9%
Minnesota*	$46,423	202%	47%	$42,304	289%	76%	$4,119	-88%	-29%
Mississippi	$48,999	213%	82%	$30,999	212%	77%	$18,000	1%	5%
Missouri*	$34,548	150%	45%	$17,784	122%	37%	$16,764	28%	8%
Montana*	$34,548	150%	46%	$21,948	150%	51%	$12,600	0%	-6%
Nebraska*	$42,600	185%	53%	$25,260	173%	54%	$17,340	12%	-1%
Nevada	$60,797	264%	85%	$33,420	228%	67%	$27,377	36%	18%
New Hampshire*	$50,666	220%	48%	$27,797	190%	50%	$22,869	30%	-2%
New Jersey*	$46,060	200%	41%	$29,260	200%	46%	$16,800	0%	-5%
New Mexico*	$92,120	400%	154%	$28,300	193%	75%	$63,820	207%	79%
New York*	$69,090	300%	75%	$28,644	202%	61%	$40,446	98%	14%
North Carolina*	$46,056	200%	62%	$32,628	223%	69%	$13,428	-23%	-8%
North Dakota*	$76,452	332%	85%	$29,556	202%	69%	$46,896	130%	16%
Ohio*	$32,703	142%	42%	$27,066	185%	57%	$5,637	-43%	-16%
Oklahoma*	$55,716	242%	85%	$29,040	198%	66%	$26,676	43%	19%
Oregon*	$46,068	200%	55%	$27,060	185%	60%	$19,008	15%	-5%
Pennsylvania*	$46,060	200%	53%	$29,260	200%	58%	$16,800	0%	-6%
Rhode Island*	$46,060	200%	50%	$32,918	225%	61%	$13,142	-25%	-10%
South Carolina*	$74,580	324%	106%	$21,225	145%	45%	$53,355	179%	61%
South Dakota*	$50,138	218%	65%	$22,826	156%	52%	$27,312	62%	13%
Tennessee*	$60,576	263%	85%	$24,324	166%	56%	$36,252	97%	29%
Texas*	$63,396	275%	85%	$21,228-$36,516	145%-250%	47%-82%	$26,880	26%	3%
Utah*	$69,288	301%	88%	$28,248	193%	59%	$41,040	108%	29%
Vermont*	$87,012	378%	102%	$31,032	212%	64%	$55,980	166%	38%
Virginia*	$81,454	354%	85%	$21,948-$27,060	150%-185%	41%-50%	$54,394	169%	35%
Washington*	$53,976	234%	57%	$32,916	225%	63%	$21,060	9%	-5%
West Virginia	$56,271	244%	85%	$28,296	193%	75%	$27,975	51%	10%
Wisconsin*	$45,991	200%	53%	$27,060	185%	51%	$18,931	15%	2%
Wyoming*	$42,708	185%	52%	$21,948	150%	47%	$20,760	35%	5%

NOTES FOR TABLES 1A AND 1B : INCOME ELIGIBILITY LIMITS

The income eligibility limits shown in the tables represent the maximum income families can have when they apply for child care assistance. Some states allow families, once receiving assistance, to continue receiving assistance up to a higher income level than that initial limit. These higher exit eligibility limits are reported below for states that have them. (The CCDBG Act of 2014 requires states to allow families receiving assistance to continue doing so until the end of their 12-month eligibility period, regardless of temporary changes in participation in work, training, or education or increases in income, unless their income exceeds 85 percent of state median income. However, exit eligibility limits are only reported below if they apply not solely prior to the end of the eligibility period, but also when determining whether a family can renew its eligibility for assistance at the beginning of a new certification period.)

Changes in income limits were calculated using raw data, rather than the rounded numbers shown in the tables. All income limits given as dollar amounts below are annual amounts for a family of three.

State income limits in February 2023 are calculated in the table as a percentage of the 2022 federal poverty level, and state income limits in February 2022 are calculated as a percentage of the 2021 federal poverty level because most states adjust their income limits for the updated federal poverty level after February each year. In the notes below, income limits (when reported as a percentage of poverty) are calculated as a percentage of the 2023 federal poverty level, unless otherwise indicated.

State income limits were calculated in the table as a percentage of state median income using the state median income estimates reported annually in the Federal Register for use in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); these estimates are prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau based on multiple years of American Community Survey data. Some states use alternative state median income estimates as the basis for setting their income limits.

Data in the tables for 2023 reflect policies as of February 2023, data in the tables for 2022 reflect policies as of February 2022, and data in the tables for 2001 reflect policies as of June 2001, unless otherwise indicated. Certain changes in policies since February 2023 are noted below.

ALABAMA: In 2001, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $27,756. In 2022, the exit eligibility limit was $43,440 (200 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level), and in 2023, it was $46,056 (200 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level).

ALASKA: The Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) payment, which the majority of families in the state receive, is not counted when determining eligibility.

ARIZONA: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $58,716. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $61,476. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $41,028 (165 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level, and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $66,024 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

ARKANSAS: The income limit shown in Table 1b for 2001 takes into account a deduction of $100 per month ($1,200 per year) that was allowed for an adult household member who worked at least 30 hours per week, assuming there was one working parent. The stated income limit, in policy, was $22,323 in 2001. The state no longer used the deduction in 2022 or 2023.

CALIFORNIA: As of July 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $83,172 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate. Also note that under policies in effect in 2001, families that had been receiving assistance as of January 1998 could continue doing so until their income reached $46,800 since they were subject to higher income limits previously in effect.

COLORADO: Counties set their income limits to qualify for assistance within state guidelines; the ranges shown in the tables indicate the lowest and highest allowable limits. In 2022, counties could set their income limits at $40,626 (185 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level), $49,410 (225 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level), or $58,194 (265 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level). In 2023, counties could set their income limits at $46,060 (200 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), $54,120 (235 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), or $62,181 (270 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level). Also note that in 2001, counties could allow families already receiving assistance to continue doing so up to an exit eligibility limit that was higher than the county's initial eligibility limit; the maximum allowable exit eligibility limit was $32,000. In 2022, all counties were required to set their exit eligibility limit at $75,770. In 2023, all counties were required to set their exit eligibility limit at $79,101. As of October 2023, the levels at which counties could set their income limits to qualify for assistance were increased to $49,720 (200 percent of poverty), $58,421 (235 percent of poverty), and $67,122 (270 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level; the exit eligibility limit for all counties was increased to $84,636 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

CONNECTICUT: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $68,298. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $69,583. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $67,124 (60 percent of state median income), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $72,717 (65 percent of state median income), to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

DELAWARE: In 2022, families already receiving assistance whose income exceeded the initial eligibility limit to qualify for assistance could continue receiving assistance, for up to an additional 12 months after their recertification, if their income did not exceed $43,920. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit for this graduated phase-out period was $46,080. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $45,996 (185 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit for the graduated phase-out period was increased to $49,728 (200 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: In 2001, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $41,640. In 2022 and 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $75,094 (85 percent of the 2020 state median income). As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $74,580 (300 percent of poverty); the exit eligibility limit was increased to $106,898 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

FLORIDA: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $55,191. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $57,889. As of July 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $37,290 (150 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level, and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $59,584 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

GEORGIA: In 2023, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $64,212. In 2022, there was no separate exit eligibility limit. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $40,000 (50 percent of state median income), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $68,000 (85 percent of state median income), to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

HAWAI'I: From March 2020 through March 2022, a family with at least one caretaker who met the definition of an essential worker was not subject to the income eligibility limit when applying for assistance. Also note that the income limit shown in Table 1b for 2001 takes into account a 20 percent deduction of all countable income. The stated income limit, in policy, was $36,828. The state no longer used the deduction in 2022 or 2023.

IDAHO: In 2022, families already receiving assistance whose income exceeded the initial eligibility limit to qualify for assistance could continue receiving assistance, for up to an additional 12 months after their recertification, if their income did not exceed $32,940. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit for this graduated phase-out period was $34,548 (150 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level). The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $43,512 (175 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit for the graduated phase-out period was increased to $49,720 (200 percent of poverty).

ILLINOIS: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $54,900 (250 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level). In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $63,336 (275 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level). The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of July 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $55,932 (225 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $68,364 (275 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level. Also note that the income limit shown in Table 1b for 2001 takes into account a 10 percent earned income deduction. The stated income limit, in policy, was $21,819. The state no longer used the deduction in 2022 or 2023.

INDIANA: In 2022 and 2023, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $61,824. As of July 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $37,296 (150 percent of poverty); the exit eligibility limit was increased to $63,684 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

IOWA: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $49,416. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $51,828. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. Also note that for special needs care, the income limit to qualify for assistance was $43,920 in 2022 and $46,060 in 2023. As of July 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance for standard care was increased to $39,780 (160 percent of poverty); the income limit to qualify for assistance for special needs care was increased to $49,720 (200 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $55,944 (225 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level.

KANSAS: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $62,148. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $64,464. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of April 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $62,160 (250 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level, and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $65,796 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

KENTUCKY: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $55,476 (85 percent of the 2021 state median income). The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2023 or 2001. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $62,520 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

LOUISIANA: Data on the state's policies as of 2001 are not available, so data on policies as of March 15, 2000 are used instead in Table 1b.

MAINE: The income limit was temporarily set at $83,088 (100 percent of state median income) from May 2022 to October 2022. As of December 2023, the income limit was increased to $74,796 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

MARYLAND: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $78,013 (85 percent of the 2017 state median income). In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $91,287 (85 percent of the 2023 state median income). The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of October 2023, the exit eligibility limit was increased to $97,420 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

MASSACHUSETTS: In 2001, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $49,248. In 2022, the exit eligibility limit was $93,714, and in 2023, it was $97,058. Also note that, for special needs care, the income limit to qualify for assistance was $93,714 in 2022 and $97,058 in 2023; there was no separate exit eligibility limit for special needs care. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $61,104 (50 percent of state median income) for standard care and $103,884 (85 percent of state median income) for special needs care, and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $103,884 for all families, to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

MICHIGAN: In 2022 and 2023, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $66,756. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of September 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $49,728 (200 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level, and the exit eligibility was increased to $73,620 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

MINNESOTA: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $63,564. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $66,178. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $49,605 (47 percent of state median income), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $70,713 (67 percent of state median income), to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

MISSOURI: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $47,220 (215 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level). In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $55,728 (242 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level). The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $37,296 (150 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $60,168 (242 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level.

MONTANA: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $43,920 (200 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level). In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $42,600 (185 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level). The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of July 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $45,996 (185 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $49,716 (200 percent of poverty).

NEBRASKA: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $43,920. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $46,056. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $45,996 (185 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $49,728 (200 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level. Also note that, since July 2014, the state disregards 10 percent of a family's income at redetermination if the family had continuously received assistance for 12 months.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $54,900. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $57,575. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of July 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $54,692 (220 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $62,150 (250 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level. As of January 2024, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $89,180 (85 percent of state median income).

NEW JERSEY: In 2001, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $36,575. In 2022, the exit eligibility limit was $54,900, and in 2023, it was $57,575. In 2022, the state also allowed families already receiving assistance to continue receiving it for a graduated phase-out period of 12 months if their incomes were between $54,900 and $94,389; in 2023, this graduated phase-out period applied to families with incomes between $57,575 and $95,554. As of March 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $49,720 (200 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $62,150 (250 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level, and the income limit for the graduated phase-out period was increased to $100,042 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

NEW MEXICO: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $87,840 (400 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level). In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $97,879 (425 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level). The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of May 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $99,440 (400 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $105,655 (425 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level.

NEW YORK: As of October 2023, the income limit was increased to $83,370 (85 percent of state median income). Also note that data on the state's policies as of 2001 are not available, so data on policies as of March 15, 2000 are used instead in Table 1b.

NORTH CAROLINA: The income limits shown in the tables for 2022 and 2023 apply to families with children birth through age 5 and families with children of any age who have special needs; the income limit for families with children ages 6 to 13 without special needs was $29,208 in 2022 and $30,624 in 2023. This separate income limit for families with older children went into effect in October 2014. Also note that, in 2022, families already receiving assistance whose income exceeded the initial eligibility limit to qualify for assistance could continue receiving assistance, for up to an additional 12 months after their recertification, if their income did not exceed $57,640. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit for this graduated phase-out period was $60,372. As of July 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $49,716 (200 percent of poverty) for families with children birth through age 5 and to $33,060 (133 percent of poverty) for families with children ages 6 to 13, to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level, and the income limit for the graduated phase-out period was increased to $63,444 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

NORTH DAKOTA: As of October 2023, the income limit was increased to $81,756 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

OHIO: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $65,880. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $69,090. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. Also note that the income limit to qualify for assistance for families in the 12 months immediately following receiving TANF was $32,940 in 2022, and $34,548 in 2023. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance for families other than those transitioning from TANF was increased to $36,047 (145 percent of poverty); the income limit to qualify for assistance for families transitioning from TANF was increased $37,296 (150 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit for all families was increased to $74,592 (300 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level.

OKLAHOMA: As of October 2023, the income limit was increased to $59,340 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

OREGON: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $63,636. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $67,152. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of March 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $49,728 (200 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level, and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $71,556 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

PENNSYLVANIA: In 2001, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $34,381. In 2022, the exit eligibility limit was $51,606 (235 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level), and in 2023, it was $69,090 (300 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level). As of May 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $49,720 (200 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level.

RHODE ISLAND: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $49,410 (225 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level). In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $69,090 (300 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level). The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of April 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $49,720 (200 percent of poverty), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $74,580 (300 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level.

SOUTH CAROLINA: In the tables, the state's income limit in 2022 is calculated as a percentage of the 2021 federal poverty level and the state's income limit in 2023 is calculated as a percentage of the 2022 federal poverty level because most other states had not adjusted their income limits for the updated federal poverty level by February of each year, but South Carolina had made the adjustment by that time, so its income limit was at 300 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level in February 2022 and 300 percent of the 2023 federal poverty level in February 2023. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was reduced to $64,068 (85 percent of state median income). Also note that in 2001, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $24,763. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2022 or 2023.

SOUTH DAKOTA: The income limits shown in the tables take into account that the state disregards 4 percent of earned income. The stated income limits, in policy, were $21,913 in 2001, $45,900 in 2022, and $48,132 in 2023. As of March 2023, the stated income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $51,957 (209 percent of poverty) to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level. Also note that in 2022, families already receiving assistance whose income exceeded the initial eligibility limit to qualify for assistance could continue receiving assistance, for up to an additional 12 months after their recertification, if their stated income did not exceed $63,349. In 2023, the stated exit eligibility limit for this graduated phase-out period was $65,172. As of October 2023, the stated exit eligibility limit for the graduated phase-out period was increased to $68,795 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

TENNESSEE: The income limits shown in the tables for 2022 and 2023 apply to teen parents and families receiving assistance through Smart Steps—a program launched in June 2016 that serves parents who are working or pursuing postsecondary education and who are not receiving or transitioning from TANF. The income limit for other families to qualify for assistance was $40,704 in 2022 and $42,758 in 2023. As of October 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance through Smart Steps was increased to $64,392 (85 percent of state median income), and the income limit to qualify for assistance for other families was increased to $45,459 (60 percent of state median income), to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

TEXAS: Prior to October 2022—when a statewide income limit to qualify for assistance was established at 85 percent of state median income—local workforce development boards set their income limits to qualify for assistance within state guidelines. The range shown in the table for income limits in 2001 indicates the lowest and highest income limits set by local boards; in 2022 and 2023, all boards set their income limits at the same level, so a single income limit is shown for those years. (For the changes in income limits between 2001 and 2023 shown in the table, the single income limit in 2023 was compared to the highest income limit set by local boards in 2001.) As of October 2023, the income limit was increased to $67,449 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

UTAH: The income limits shown in the tables take into account a standard deduction of $100 per month ($1,200 per year) for each working parent, assuming there is one working parent in the family, and a standard deduction of $100 per month ($1,200 per year) for all families to help cover any medical expenses. The stated income limits, in policy, were $25,848 in 2001, $61,176 in 2022, and $66,888 in 2023. As of October 2023, the stated income limit was increased to $71,940 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

VERMONT: In the tables, the state's income limit in 2023 is calculated as a percentage of the 2022 federal poverty level because most other states had not adjusted their income limits for the updated federal poverty level by February of that year, but Vermont had made the adjustment by that time, so its income limit was at 350 percent of the 2023 federal poverty level in February 2023. Also note that in 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $67,320 (85 percent of the 2021 state median income). The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001 or 2023. As of April 2024, the income limit was increased to $103,284 (400 percent of the 2024 federal poverty level).

VIRGINIA: In 2001, the state had three separate income limits for different regions of the state; these income limits were: $21,948, $23,400, and $27,060. In 2022 and 2023, there was a statewide income limit to qualify for assistance for families with at least one child under age 5, not yet in kindergarten; these are the income limits shown in the tables for 2022 and 2023. For other families, there were four separate regional income limits in 2022: $32,940, $35,136, $40,626, and $54,900. There were also four separate regional income limits for these families in 2023: $34,548 (150 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), $36,852 (160 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), $42,612 (185 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level), and $57,576 (250 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level). (For the changes in income limits shown in the tables, the income limit for families with children under age 5 in 2023 was compared to the income limit for families with children under age 5 in 2022 and to the highest regional income limit in 2001.) Also note that in 2022, families already receiving assistance, with children of all ages and in all regions of the state, could continue receiving assistance until their income reached $77,794. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $81,454.

WASHINGTON: In 2022, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $55,560. In 2023, the exit eligibility limit was $58,464. The state did not have a separate exit eligibility limit in 2001. As of April 2023, the income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $56,592 (60 percent of state median income), and the exit eligibility limit was increased to $61,308 (65 percent of state median income), to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

WISCONSIN: In the tables, the state's income limit in 2022 is calculated as a percentage of the 2021 federal poverty level and the state's income limit in 2023 is calculated as a percentage of the 2022 federal poverty level because most other states had not adjusted their income limits for the updated federal poverty level by February of each year, but Wisconsin had made the adjustment by that time, so its income limit was at 185 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level in February 2022 and 185 percent of the 2023 federal poverty level in February 2023. Also note that in 2001, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $29,256. In 2022, the exit eligibility limit was $71,177, and in 2023, it was $73,469 (85 percent of state median income).

WYOMING: The income limits shown in the tables for 2022 and 2023 take into account a standard deduction of $200 per month ($2,400 per year) for each working parent, assuming there is one working parent in the family. The stated income limits, in policy, were $38,436 in 2022 and $40,308 in 2023. Also note that in 2001, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $27,060. In 2022, the stated exit eligibility limit was $49,416, and in 2023, it was $51,816. As of April 2023, the stated income limit to qualify for assistance was increased to $43,500 (175 percent of poverty), and the stated exit eligibility limit was increased to $55,932 (225 percent of poverty), to adjust for the 2023 federal poverty level.

TABLE 2

Waiting Lists for Child Care Assistance

	NUMBER OF CHILDREN OR FAMILIES ON WAITING LIST AS OF EARLY 2023	NUMBER OF CHILDREN OR FAMILIES ON WAITING LIST AS OF EARLY 2022	NUMBER OF CHILDREN OR FAMILIES ON WAITING LIST AS OF DECEMBER 2001
Alabama*	No waiting list	No waiting list	5,089 children
Alaska	No waiting list	No waiting list	588 children
Arizona	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Arkansas	No waiting list	No waiting list	8,000 children
California*	Waiting lists at local level	Waiting lists at local level	Waiting lists at local level
Colorado*	No waiting list	9 children	Waiting lists at local level
Connecticut*	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Delaware	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
District of Columbia*	No waiting list	No waiting list	9,124 children
Florida*	3,758 children	7,173 children	46,800 children
Georgia*	Frozen intake	Frozen intake	16,099 children
Hawai'i	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Idaho	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Illinois	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Indiana*	1,884 children	3,736 children	11,958 children
Iowa	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Kansas	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Kentucky	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Louisiana*	6,482 children	No waiting list	No waiting list
Maine	No waiting list	No waiting list	2,000 children
Maryland	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Massachusetts*	20,473 children	16,331 children	18,000 children
Michigan	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Minnesota*	3,357 families	579 families	4,735 children
Mississippi	No waiting list	No waiting list	10,422 children
Missouri	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Montana	No waiting list	No waiting list	Waiting lists at local level
Nebraska	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Nevada	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
New Hampshire	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
New Jersey*	No waiting list	No waiting list	9,800 children
New Mexico	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
New York*	No waiting list	Waiting lists at local level	Waiting lists at local level
North Carolina*	5,285 children	8,663 children	25,363 children
North Dakota	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Ohio	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Oklahoma	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Oregon*	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Pennsylvania*	No waiting list	No waiting list	540 children
Rhode Island	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
South Carolina	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
South Dakota	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Tennessee*	No waiting list	No waiting list	9,388 children (and frozen intake)
Texas*	61,350 children	41,057 children	36,799 children
Utah	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Vermont	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Virginia*	No waiting list	6 children	4,255 children
Washington	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
West Virginia	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Wisconsin	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list
Wyoming	No waiting list	No waiting list	No waiting list

NOTES FOR TABLE 2:
WAITING LISTS FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

Data in the tables for 2023 reflect policies as of February 2023, and data in the tables for 2022 reflect policies as of February 2022, unless otherwise indicated.

ALABAMA: Data for December 2001 are not available so data from November 2001 are used instead.

CALIFORNIA: The estimated number of children on the waiting list in 2001 was 280,000; estimates for 2022 and 2023 are not available. The state does not have a centralized waiting list; most local contractors and some counties maintain waiting lists.

COLORADO: Waiting lists are kept at the county level, rather than at the state level. Four counties had waiting lists in 2001, but data on the total number of children on waiting lists in counties that had them are not available. In addition, four counties had frozen intake in 2001. The waiting list total for 2022 is the total of reported county waiting lists. The waiting list total in the table for February 2022 reflects Boulder County's waiting list; the county ended its waiting list in September 2022. In addition, Gunnison County had frozen intake from March 2020 until October 2022, when it removed its freeze and implemented a waiting list. In February 2023, Gunnison was using a waiting list, but no children were on that list; no other counties had a waiting list or a freeze in effect in February 2023. Families receiving TANF, transitioning from TANF, or receiving child welfare child care are exempt from waiting lists when they are in effect. Counties may exempt other families from their waiting lists; however, if they do, they must include households with incomes at or below 130 percent of poverty, teen parents, children with additional care needs, and homeless families among those who are exempt from the waiting list.

CONNECTICUT: The state began placing families on the waiting list as of March 2023.

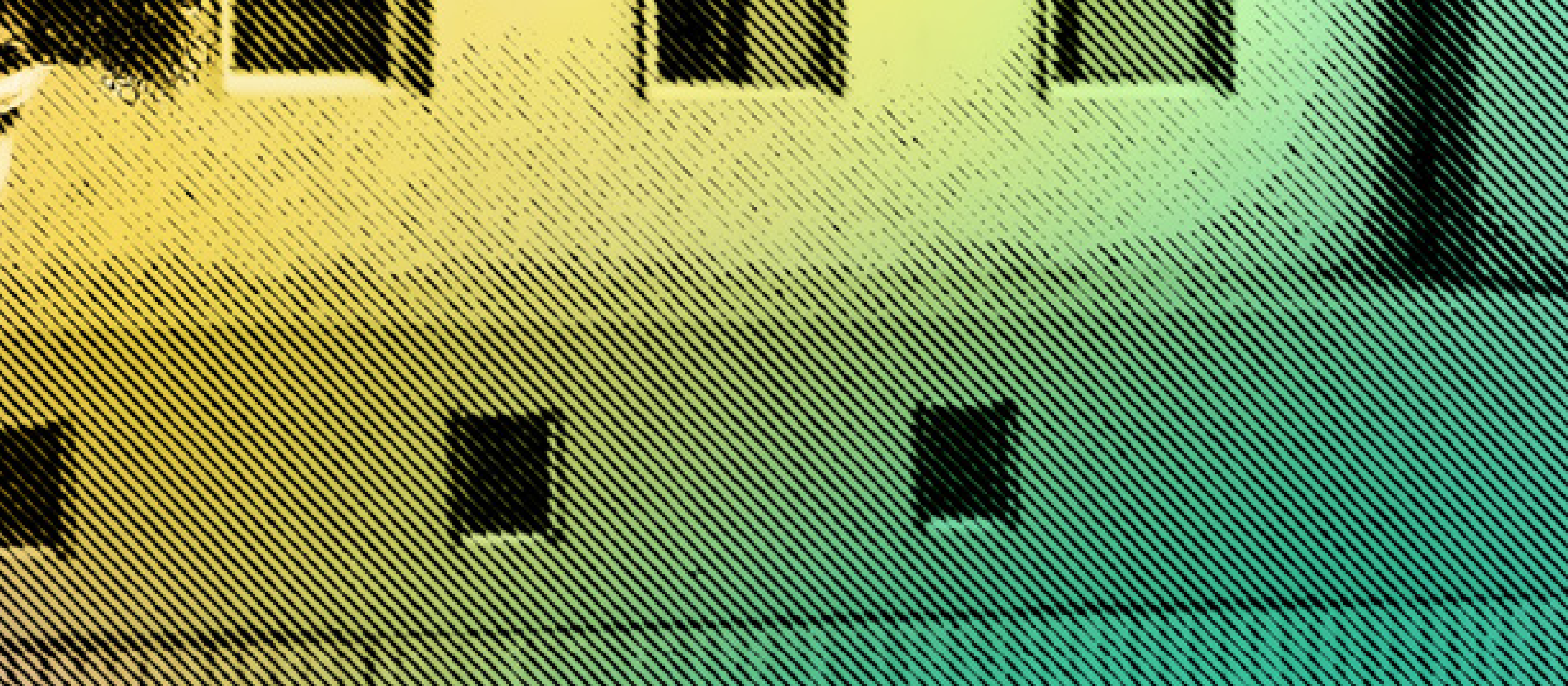
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: The waiting list total for 2001 may have included some children living in the wider metropolitan area that encompasses parts of Maryland and Virginia.

FLORIDA: Families receiving TANF and subject to federal work requirements and children up to age 9 receiving protective services, although not statutorily exempt from the waiting list, are prioritized for child care assistance.

GEORGIA: As of August 2016, the state froze intake for families who did not meet the priority criteria. In 2022 and 2023, the state no longer referred to its policy as frozen intake, but it only served families who met the priority criteria. Children and families that received priority for child care assistance included families participating in TANF, children with disabilities, grandparents raising grandchildren, children requiring court-ordered supervision, children receiving protective services, foster children, parents ages 20 or younger, families who lacked regular and adequate housing, families experiencing domestic violence, families with children participating in the state prekindergarten program, families experiencing state- or federally declared natural disasters, and families with very low incomes (defined as families with incomes at or below 150 percent of poverty in February 2022, and as families with incomes at or below 50 percent of poverty for applications received on or after December 16, 2022). As of May 2022, the state added student parents to the list of priority groups.

INDIANA: Families receiving TANF and with parents participating in the state's employment and training program or searching for a job and families with referrals from the Department of Child Services, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Pregnancy Promise, or Ivy Tech Community College are served without being placed on the waiting list. Children enrolled in the state prekindergarten program are also generally given priority for services and not placed on the waiting list. Also note that in 2001, in addition to the waiting list, some counties had frozen intake.

LOUISIANA: The state began placing families on the waiting list as of October 2022. Data for February 2023 are not available, so data from December 2023 are used instead.



MASSACHUSETTS: The state does not determine children's eligibility at the time they are added to the waiting list. Also note that, under policies in effect until October 2023, families receiving TANF and with parents participating in the employment services program, families referred by the child welfare agency based on open cases of abuse or neglect, siblings of children already in care, and children of actively deployed members of the military were served without being placed on the waiting list; in addition, homeless families residing in state-funded shelters could be served through dedicated contracts without being placed on the waiting list. As of October 2023, the state updated its policies on prioritizing families for services.

MINNESOTA: Families receiving TANF, families transitioning from TANF (for up to one year after their TANF case closes), and parents under age 21 pursuing a high school degree or GED (and not receiving TANF) are served without being placed on the waiting list.

NEW JERSEY: Data for 2001 are not available, so data from March 2002 are used instead.

NEW YORK: Waiting lists are kept at the local district level and statewide data on the total number of children and/or families on local waiting lists in 2001 and 2022 are not available. Each local district also has the authority to freeze intake and stop adding names to its waiting list. In February 2022, the only district that had a waiting list was New York City; its waiting list was cleared by October 2022. As of February 2023, there did not appear to be any districts with waiting lists. Families receiving TANF, families eligible to receive TANF who need child care services for a child under age 13 in order to enable the parents to engage in work or participate in required work activities, and families who are transitioning off public assistance are served without being placed on the waiting list when there is one in effect.

NORTH CAROLINA: The state does not exempt any families from the waiting list, but it prioritizes vulnerable populations, including children with special needs and families experiencing homelessness or in a temporary living situation.

OREGON: The state began placing families on the waiting list in November 2023. Families receiving TANF, families receiving Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence Survivors (TA-DVS), families referred by the Child Welfare division, and families reapplying for child care assistance within two months of benefits ending are served without being placed on the waiting list when there is one in effect.

PENNSYLVANIA: Families receiving or transitioning from TANF are exempt from the waiting list when the state has one in effect. In addition, the state prioritizes certain children and families for services, including foster children, children enrolled in the state prekindergarten program, Head Start, or Early Head Start who need wrap-around child care, newborn siblings of children who are already enrolled, homeless children, teen parents who are attending high school or participating in a GED program on a full-time basis, and parents ages 18 through 22 who are attending high school on a full-time basis.

TENNESSEE: When the state reported its data in 2001, intake was frozen for all families other than those receiving or transitioning from TANF. The waiting list total for 2001 represents the number of children on the waiting list when intake was closed.

TEXAS: Local workforce development boards maintain waiting lists. The totals in the table represent the aggregate number of children on waiting lists across all of the state's 28 local boards. In addition, some boards may have frozen intake. Families in the TANF work program (Choices), families applying for TANF, families in the SNAP Employment and Training program, homeless families, and children receiving protective services are served without being placed on the waiting list.

VIRGINIA: Data for December 2001 are not available, so data from January 2001 are used instead. Families receiving or transitioning from TANF and families participating in the TANF work program are served without being placed on the waiting list when there is one in effect. In addition, there are six groups of families that, although not exempt from being placed on the waiting list, are given priority for services when there is a waiting list in effect: families that include a child who has special needs for whom child care assistance is requested; families with a child experiencing homelessness; families involved in child protective services or foster care prevention; families that include a minor parent under age 18 and in high school, whose child will be receiving child care assistance; emancipated teen parents under age 18 and in high school; and families whose cases were discontinued due to a lack of funds.

TABLE 3A

Parent Copayments for a Family of Three with an Income at 150 Percent of Poverty and One Child in Care

	MONTHLY COPAYMENT IN 2023		MONTHLY COPAYMENT IN 2022		MONTHLY COPAYMENT IN 2001		CHANGE 2022 TO 2023		CHANGE 2001 TO 2023	
	As a dollar amount	As a percent of income	As a dollar amount	As a percent of income	As a dollar amount	As a percent of income	In dollar amount	In percent of income	In dollar amount	In percent of income
Alabama*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$215	12%	$0	0%	-$215	-12%
Alaska*	$153	5%	$0	0%	$71	4%	$153	5%	$82	1%
Arizona*	$32	1%	$65	2%	$217	12%	-$32	-1%	-$185	-11%
Arkansas*	$28	1%	$28	1%	$224	12%	$0	0%	-$196	-11%
California*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%
Colorado*	$197	6%	$178	6%	$185	10%	$19	0%	$12	-4%
Connecticut*	$186	6%	$173	6%	$110	6%	$13	0%	$76	0%
Delaware*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$159	9%	$0	0%	-$159	-9%
District of Columbia*	$73	2%	$63	2%	$91	5%	$10	0%	-$18	-3%
Florida*	$232	7%	$216	8%	$104	6%	$16	0%	$128	2%
Georgia*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$139	8%	$0	0%	-$139	-8%
Hawai'i*	$124	4%	$86	3%	$38	2%	$38	1%	$86	2%
Idaho*	Not eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Illinois*	$222	7%	$170	6%	$134	7%	$52	1%	$88	0%
Indiana*	$311	10%	$0	0%	$154	8%	$311	10%	$157	2%
Iowa*	$193	6%	$185	6%	Not eligible	Not eligible	$8	0%	N/A	N/A
Kansas*	$92	3%	$82	3%	$162	9%	$10	0%	-$70	-6%
Kentucky*	$281	9%	$281	10%	$177	10%	$0	-1%	$104	-1%
Louisiana*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$114	6%	$0	0%	-$114	-6%
Maine*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$183	10%	$0	0%	-$183	-10%
Maryland*	$13	0%	$92	3%	$236	13%	-$79	-3%	-$223	-12%
Massachusetts*	$74	2%	$61	2%	$160	9%	$13	0%	-$86	-6%
Michigan*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$24	1%	$0	0%	-$24	-1%
Minnesota*	$101	3%	$84	3%	$53	3%	$17	0%	$48	0%
Mississippi*	$190	6%	$0	0%	$105	6%	$190	6%	$85	0%
Missouri*	$234	8%	$0	0%	Not eligible	Not eligible	$234	8%	N/A	N/A
Montana*	$491	16%	$432	15%	$256	14%	$59	1%	$235	2%
Nebraska*	$218	7%	$202	7%	$129	7%	$16	0%	$89	0%
Nevada*	$0	0%	$234	8%	$281	15%	-$234	-8%	-$281	-15%
New Hampshire*	$388	13%	$360	12%	$2	0%	$29	0%	$386	12%
New Jersey*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$133	7%	$0	0%	-$133	-7%
New Mexico*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$115	6%	$0	0%	-$115	-6%
New York*	$119	4%	$104	4%	$191	10%	$15	0%	-$72	-7%
North Carolina*	$311	10%	$288	10%	$159	9%	$23	0%	$152	1%
North Dakota*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$293	16%	$0	0%	-$293	-16%
Ohio*	$277	9%	$256	9%	$88	5%	$21	0%	$189	4%
Oklahoma*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$146	8%	$0	0%	-$146	-8%
Oregon*	$10	0%	$10	0%	$319	17%	$0	0%	-$309	-17%
Pennsylvania*	$182	6%	$165	6%	$152	8%	$17	0%	$30	-2%
Rhode Island*	$217	7%	$0	0%	$19	1%	$217	7%	$198	6%
South Carolina*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$77	4%	$0	0%	-$77	-4%
South Dakota*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$365	20%	$0	0%	-$365	-20%
Tennessee*	$217	7%	$204	7%	$112	6%	$13	0%	$105	1%
Texas*	$270	9%	$270	9%	$256	14%	$0	-1%	$14	-5%
Utah*	$111	4%	$0	0%	$220	12%	$111	4%	-$109	-8%
Vermont*	$0	0%	$266	9%	$123	7%	-$266	-9%	-$123	-7%
Virginia*	$60	2%	$0	0%	$183	10%	$60	2%	-$123	-8%
Washington*	$90	3%	$90	3%	$87	5%	$0	0%	$3	-2%
West Virginia*	$141	5%	$135	5%	$54	3%	$5	0%	$87	2%
Wisconsin*	$251	8%	$251	9%	$160	9%	$0	-1%	$91	-1%
Wyoming*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$98	5%	$0	0%	-$98	-5%

TABLE 3B

Parent Copayments for a Family of Three with an Income at 100 Percent of Poverty and One Child in Care

	MONTHLY COPAYMENT IN 2023		MONTHLY COPAYMENT IN 2022		MONTHLY COPAYMENT IN 2001		CHANGE 2022 TO 2023		CHANGE 2001 TO 2023	
	As a dollar amount	As a percent of income	As a dollar amount	As a percent of income	As a dollar amount	As a percent of income	In dollar amount	In percent of income	In dollar amount	In percent of income
Alabama*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$65	5%	$0	0%	-$65	-5%
Alaska*	$82	4%	$0	0%	$14	1%	$82	4%	$68	3%
Arizona*	$32	2%	$65	3%	$65	5%	-$32	-2%	-$33	-4%
Arkansas*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%
California*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%
Colorado*	$40	2%	$34	2%	$113	9%	$6	0%	-$73	-7%
Connecticut*	$83	4%	$77	4%	$49	4%	$6	0%	$34	0%
Delaware*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$55	5%	$0	0%	-$55	-5%
District of Columbia*	$30	1%	$24	1%	$32	3%	$6	0%	-$2	-1%
Florida*	$115	6%	$123	6%	$69	6%	-$8	-1%	$46	0%
Georgia*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$21	2%	$0	0%	-$21	-2%
Hawai'i*	$21	1%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$21	1%	$21	1%
Idaho*	$25	1%	$25	1%	$65	5%	$0	0%	-$40	-4%
Illinois*	$20	1%	$19	1%	$65	5%	$1	0%	-$45	-4%
Indiana*	$104	5%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$104	5%	$104	5%
Iowa*	$30	1%	$20	1%	$22	2%	$11	0%	$8	0%
Kansas*	$58	3%	$55	3%	$22	2%	$3	0%	$36	1%
Kentucky*	$217	10%	$195	10%	$97	8%	$22	0%	$120	3%
Louisiana*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$49	4%	$0	0%	-$49	-4%
Maine*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$97	8%	$0	0%	-$97	-8%
Maryland*	$13	1%	$24	1%	$90	7%	-$11	-1%	-$77	-7%
Massachusetts*	$6	0%	$4	0%	$40	3%	$3	0%	-$34	-3%
Michigan*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$24	2%	$0	0%	-$24	-2%
Minnesota*	$60	3%	$56	3%	$5	0%	$4	0%	$55	2%
Mississippi*	$104	5%	$0	0%	$47	4%	$104	5%	$57	1%
Missouri*	$108	5%	$0	0%	$43	4%	$108	5%	$65	2%
Montana*	$127	6%	$77	4%	$49	4%	$50	2%	$78	2%
Nebraska*	$145	7%	$134	7%	$30	2%	$11	0%	$115	5%
Nevada*	$0	0%	$78	4%	$0	0%	-$78	-4%	$0	0%
New Hampshire*	$155	8%	$144	7%	$0	0%	$11	0%	$155	8%
New Jersey*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$71	6%	$0	0%	-$71	-6%
New Mexico*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$47	4%	$0	0%	-$47	-4%
New York*	$15	1%	$9	0%	$4	0%	$7	0%	$11	0%
North Carolina*	$207	10%	$192	10%	$106	9%	$15	0%	$101	1%
North Dakota*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$158	13%	$0	0%	-$158	-13%
Ohio*	$155	7%	$135	7%	$43	4%	$20	0%	$112	4%
Oklahoma*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$54	4%	$0	0%	-$54	-4%
Oregon*	$5	0%	$5	0%	$90	7%	$0	0%	-$85	-7%
Pennsylvania*	$104	5%	$91	5%	$65	5%	$13	0%	$39	0%
Rhode Island*	$41	2%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$41	2%	$41	2%
South Carolina*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$43	4%	$0	0%	-$43	-4%
South Dakota*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%
Tennessee*	$143	7%	$134	7%	$39	3%	$9	0%	$104	4%
Texas*	$170	8%	$170	9%	$170	14%	$0	-1%	$0	-6%
Utah*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$36	3%	$0	0%	-$36	-3%
Vermont*	$0	0%	$18	1%	$0	0%	-$18	-1%	$0	0%
Virginia*	$60	3%	$0	0%	$122	10%	$60	3%	-$62	-7%
Washington*	$65	3%	$65	3%	$20	2%	$0	0%	$45	1%
West Virginia*	$92	4%	$81	4%	$27	2%	$11	0%	$65	2%
Wisconsin*	$128	6%	$128	7%	$61	5%	$0	0%	$67	1%
Wyoming*	$0	0%	$0	0%	$10	1%	$0	0%	-$10	-1%

NOTES FOR TABLES 3A AND 3B: PARENT COPAYMENTS

For a family of three, an income at 100 percent of poverty was equal to $14,630 a year in 2001, $23,030 a year in 2022, and $24,860 a year in 2023.

For a family of three, an income at 150 percent of poverty was equal to $21,945 a year in 2001, $34,545 a year in 2022, and $37,290 a year in 2023.

For states that calculate their copayments as a percentage of the cost of care, it is assumed that the family was purchasing care at the state's maximum base payment rate for licensed center care for a 4-year-old.

Monthly copayments were calculated from hourly, daily, and weekly copayments assuming the child was in care 9 hours a day, 5 days a week, 4.33 weeks a month.

Copayments for states with standard income deductions were determined based on adjusted income.

Changes in copayments were calculated using raw data, rather than the rounded numbers shown in the tables.

A number of states waived copayments for all families in 2022 and/or 2023 in response to the pandemic. For these states, the tables show families to have a $0 copayment, even if some of these states technically assigned a copayment value to the families and then waived it.

Data in the tables for 2023 reflect policies as of February 2023, data in the tables for 2022 reflect policies as of February 2022, and data in the tables for 2001 reflect policies as of June 2001, unless otherwise indicated. Certain changes in policies since February 2023 are noted below.

ALABAMA: Children receiving protective services and foster children are exempt from copayments. Families with incomes below 100 percent of poverty are also exempt from copayments. Copayments are waived on a case-by-case basis for families participating in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program. In addition, copayments were waived for all families from June 2021 to November 2023.

ALASKA: Families applying for or receiving TANF, children receiving protective services, and foster children are exempt from copayments. In addition, copayments were waived for all families in February 2021 and from June 2021 through December 2022.

ARIZONA: Parents receiving TANF (Cash Assistance) who are employed, families participating in the Cash Assistance Grant Diversion program, families referred by the TANF Jobs Program, and children receiving protective services are exempt from copayments.

ARKANSAS: Copayments vary with the quality level of the care a family uses, with a family paying 4 percent of the cost of care if using a two-star provider in the state's quality rating and improvement system (which currently has six star levels), and 2 percent if using a provider with a three-star rating or higher. The copayment amounts shown in the tables for 2022 and 2023 assume the family was using a two-star provider, since as of July 2022, all providers serving families receiving child care assistance must be at the two-star level or higher. (Previously, all providers serving families receiving child care assistance had to be at the one-star level or higher; families paid 6 percent of the cost of care if using a one-star provider.) Also note that families receiving TANF, families in their first year of transitioning from TANF, foster children, and children receiving protective services are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes below 40 percent of the 2021 state median income ($23,323 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022 and families with incomes below 40 percent of the 2023 state median income ($25,017 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2023.

CALIFORNIA: Families receiving TANF and families whose children are participating in the state-funded part-day prekindergarten program are exempt from copayments. Families with children who have been identified as at risk of abuse or neglect or who are receiving protective services may be exempt from copayments for 12 months when the referral indicates that the fee is waived. Families experiencing homelessness are exempt from paying family fees in pilot counties where approved policy flexibilities supersede state law. In addition, families with incomes up to 39 percent of the 2019 state median income ($35,844 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes up to 40 percent of the 2020 state median income ($38,636 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from July 2021 through September 2023. As of October 2023, families with incomes below 75 percent of state median income ($74,382 a year for a family of three) are exempt from copayments.

COLORADO: Families receiving TANF and with parents enrolled in activities other than paid employment, families receiving child welfare child care, and parents without income are exempt from copayments. Families receiving protective services child care do not have a parent fee unless the child has countable income. Teen parents may have their copayment waived if it produces a hardship. Families that are experiencing homelessness do not have a parent fee assessed during a 60-day stabilization period.

CONNECTICUT: TANF families participating in approved training activities who have no earned income, foster children, and children in the first year following adoption are exempt from copayments.

DELAWARE: Families receiving TANF, grandparents who are caretakers, foster parents, and families referred from the Division of Family Services as well as families with incomes below 70 percent of the federal poverty level are exempt from copayments. Copayments were waived for all families from April 2020 to October 2023.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: TANF families participating in countable activities other than employment, TANF payees in countable activities, TANF parents with physical or mental disabilities, unemployed parents receiving vocational rehabilitation services, children receiving protective services, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and teen parents in junior and senior high school are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022 and 2023.

FLORIDA: Local early learning coalitions set their copayments, subject to state approval; the copayments in the tables reflect the maximum copayment levels allowed under state policy and used by a local coalition. Also note that a coalition may, on a case-by-case basis, waive the copayment for an at-risk child or temporarily waive the copayment for a family whose income is at or below the federal poverty level and who experiences a natural disaster or an event that limits the parent's ability to pay, such as incarceration, placement in residential treatment, or becoming homeless, or an emergency situation such as a household fire or burglary, or while the parent is participating in parenting classes.

GEORGIA: The state discounts copayments by 15 percent for families across the state using providers with ratings of one star or higher in the state's quality rating and improvement system, which has three star levels. Also note that foster children and parents under age 18 are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes below 10 percent of the 2018 federal poverty level ($2,078 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes below 10 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level ($2,303 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from May 2021 to October 2023.

HAWAI'I: Families receiving protective services and caretakers who are foster parents are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2019 federal poverty level for Hawai'i ($24,540 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022 and 2023. Families with at least one caretaker who was an essential worker were exempt from copayments if they applied before April 2022.

IDAHO: Families receiving TANF that are participating in activities other than work and foster children are exempt from copayments.

ILLINOIS: Representative payees of children who are receiving TANF or general assistance benefits, who are not parents or stepparents, and who work outside the home are exempt from copayments. As of July 2022, families experiencing homelessness and families transitioning from Department of Family Services Intact Family programs are exempt from copayments as well. Also as of July 2022, all families with either or both parents/guardians deployed by a branch of the U.S. armed services are exempt from copayments; under the previous policy, households in which a single parent was called to active duty or both parents were called to active duty at the same time were exempt from copayments during deployment. Copayments were $1 per month for families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) in 2022, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level in 2023, and families with a parent or guardian working as a licensed child care provider as of July 2022.

INDIANA: Copayments vary depending on how long the family has been receiving child care assistance, with families paying a higher percentage of income the longer they receive assistance. The copayments shown in the tables assume it is the first year the family is receiving assistance. Also note that families participating in the state prekindergarten program, foster families, and families receiving child protective services are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from March 2021 through April 2022.

IOWA: The state calculates copayments based on units of care; a unit is a half day (up to 5 hours of service per 24-hour period). Also note that families receiving TANF and families receiving protective services are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023.

KANSAS: Families receiving TANF, families in the first two months following the loss of TANF eligibility, parents participating in the Food Assistance Education and Training work program, families receiving child care for social service reasons, and families participating in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023.

KENTUCKY: Families needing child care for reasons of child protection or permanent placement and families where the parent is employed by an approved child care facility are exempt from copayments. In addition, regardless of family size, families with incomes at or below $16,788 a year were exempt from copayments in 2022 and 2023.

LOUISIANA: Families receiving TANF, foster children, homeless families, and families participating in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 64 percent of state median income ($44,868 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from April 2020 until September 2022. Also note that data are not available for June 2001, so data from March 2000 are used instead.

MAINE: Copayments were waived for all families from March 2021 through September 2022. Copayments were waived for families with incomes below 60 percent of state median income ($49,853 a year for a family of three) from October 2022 through September 2023.

MARYLAND: The state revised its copayment structure as of May 2022 to cap copayments at $1 to $3 per week (depending on the amount of care used); prior to that, copayments were based on maximum state payment rates in the region where the family lived. Also note that families receiving TANF, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), SNAP, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) supplemental nutrition, Welfare Avoidance Grant (WAG), or Guaranteed Basic Income Program benefits, families participating in Head Start or the state-funded prekindergarten program, minor parents, migrant workers, families experiencing homelessness, and families participating in the Federal Housing Act Housing Choice Voucher program are exempt from copayments.

MASSACHUSETTS: Families receiving or transitioning from TANF, foster parents, guardians, caretakers, and families receiving protective services are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023.

MICHIGAN: Families receiving TANF, children receiving protective services, foster children, families receiving SSI benefits, migrant farmworker families, homeless families, and children attending programs that attain certain quality levels in the state's quality rating and improvement system are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from November 2021 through September 2023.

MINNESOTA: Families with incomes below 75 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($16,470 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes below 75 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level ($17,273 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2023.

MISSISSIPPI: Families receiving TANF and homeless families with no countable income are exempt from copayments, and children receiving protective services, children participating in the home visitation program, children with special needs, and parents with a disability who are receiving SSI benefits have a copayment of $10 per month. In addition, families with incomes below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022 and 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from April 2020 through December 2022.

MISSOURI: Families receiving TANF, children with disabilities who are receiving SSI benefits, children receiving services through the Department of Mental Health, children with developmental delays, foster children, adoptive children, children under court-ordered supervision, and homeless families are exempt from copayments. Copayments were waived for all families from June 2021 through August 2022.

MONTANA: Children receiving protective services are exempt from copayments.

NEBRASKA: TANF families and families receiving child care for child welfare are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023. Also note that after a family has had one year of continuous eligibility, 10 percent is deducted from the family's gross income in calculating the copayment.

NEVADA: Families receiving TANF and with parents participating in work or work-related activities, families receiving protective services, foster families, homeless families, and families receiving wrap-around services (services provided before and after Head Start programs) are exempt from copayments. In addition, the state began waiving copayments for all families as of July 2022.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Children receiving child care as a preventive service if they are at risk for abuse or neglect are exempt from copayments.

NEW JERSEY: For children who are in paid foster placement, the copayment is assessed based on the income of the child, and thus almost always $0. For children who are receiving protective services and residing with a related caregiver, para-foster care provider, or in their own home with their parents, and for families experiencing homelessness, the copayment may be reduced or waived on a case-by-case basis. Copayments were waived for all families as of November 2021 and will continue to be waived through June 2024.

NEW MEXICO: As of August 2021, copayments were waived for families with incomes at or below 200 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($43,920 a year for a family of three). As of May 2022, copayments were waived for all families; families will be given three months' notice before copayments are resumed.

NEW YORK: Prior to June 2023, local social services districts set their copayments within a state-specified range; the copayments in the tables reflect the maximum amounts allowed in that range. As of June 2023, a uniform copayment schedule is used statewide, with copayments set at the minimum level of the range within which local districts previously were allowed to set copayments. Families receiving TANF and participating in their required activity, foster families, homeless families, families receiving child care assistance as a protective or preventive service, and children residing with a caretaker other than a parent or person with financial responsibility for the child are exempt from copayments. Also note that data are not available for June 2001, so data from March 2000 are used instead.

NORTH CAROLINA: Children receiving protective services or child welfare services and foster families are exempt from copayments.

NORTH DAKOTA: Families receiving TANF, families receiving services through the Crossroads program (which provides support to parents up to age 21 so they can continue their education), and families participating in ARSEN (Alternative Response for Substance Exposed Newborns) are exempt from copayments. In addition, the state waived copayments for all families from March 2021 through June 2023. As of July 2023, the state began waiving copayments for families with incomes up to 30 percent of state median income ($26,988 a year for a family of three).

OHIO: Homeless families and families receiving protective child care services are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023.

OKLAHOMA: Families receiving TANF, foster children, children under age 6 adopted through the foster care system, children ages 6 to 12 adopted through the state agency when the child meets the definition of a disabled child, families headed by a caretaker who is not legally or financially responsible for the children, children receiving SSI benefits, and children participating in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program are exempt from copayments. Children receiving protective services may be exempted from copayments on a case-by-case basis. In addition, copayments were waived for all families from April 2020 through September 2023. As of October 2023, the state is covering 50 percent of families' copayments.

OREGON: Families receiving TANF and with a working parent, families transitioning from TANF, families with a parent searching for a job following the loss of employment or with an unemployed parent who has moved into the home, families on authorized medical leave, and families receiving services through a Head Start or Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership contracted slot are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023.

PENNSYLVANIA: Families receiving either TANF or SNAP benefits and with parents who are not working, but who are participating in employment and training programs, are exempt from copayments.

RHODE ISLAND: Foster children, homeless families, and families receiving TANF who have child care assistance as a supportive service are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from February 2021 to March 2022.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Families receiving TANF, foster children, homeless families, dual language learners, families receiving protective services, and families participating in Head Start are exempt from copayments. In addition, copayments were waived for all families from October 2020 through September 2023.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Families receiving TANF and children in protective custody are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with adjusted incomes at or below 160 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($35,136 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022; as of June 2022, families with adjusted incomes at or below 170 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level ($39,151 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments.

TENNESSEE: Families receiving TANF are exempt from copayments. In addition, copayments were waived for all families from March 2020 through August 2021 and from August 2022 through December 2022.

TEXAS: Local workforce development boards set their copayments within state guidelines; the copayments in the tables reflect the maximum copayment levels used by a local board. Also note that parents participating in the TANF work program (Choices), families applying for TANF, families transitioning from TANF, families participating in the SNAP Employment and Training program, children receiving protective services, and homeless families are exempt from copayments. In addition, during the pandemic, the state temporarily exempted from copayments parents who were employed in state-specified jobs that were in the service industry and that had been adversely impacted by the pandemic; this exemption was not available to families that enrolled in the program after March 2022.

UTAH: Families receiving TANF are exempt from copayments, and families transitioning from TANF are exempt from copayments for up to six months. In addition, families with adjusted incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from May 2020 until February 2023, when copayments were reinstated for new applicants and for families already receiving assistance who were renewing their assistance.

VERMONT: Families receiving TANF, foster children, children who have an adoption assistance agreement with the state, and children under legal guardianship with a guardian who is receiving a TANF Child Only grant are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 150 percent of the 2023 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023.

VIRGINIA: Families receiving TANF, families participating in the SNAP Employment and Training program, and families whose children are enrolled in Head Start are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from March 2021 through December 2022.

WASHINGTON: Families experiencing homelessness and children who have received child protective services, child welfare services, or a family assessment response and have been referred to child care as part of their case management and reside with their biological parents are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes below 20 percent of the 2021 state median income ($17,112 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with incomes below 20 percent of the 2022 state median income ($17,988 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2023.

WEST VIRGINIA: Foster families, families receiving protective services, and parents searching for a job are exempt from copayments. In addition, families with incomes at or below 40 percent of the 2019 federal poverty level ($8,532 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022 and 2023.

WISCONSIN: Foster children, children in subsidized guardianship or with interim caretakers, children residing with a relative under a court-ordered placement, and teen parents participating in Learnfare are exempt from copayments.

WYOMING: Families with adjusted incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2021 federal poverty level ($21,960 a year for a family of three) were exempt from copayments in 2022, and families with adjusted incomes at or below 100 percent of the 2022 federal poverty level were exempt from copayments in 2023. Copayments were waived for all families from October 2021 through August 2023.

TABLE 4A

State Payment Rates in 2023

	STATE PAYMENT RATES IN 2023 COMPARED TO MARKET RATES	YEAR WHEN PAYMENT RATES LAST CHANGED
Alabama*	75th percentile of 2021 rates	2022
Alaska*	Below the 75th percentile of 2020-21 rates	2023
Arizona*	75th percentile of 2018 rates	2022
Arkansas*	At or above the 75th percentile of 2019 rates	2021
California*	75th percentile of 2018 rates	2022
Colorado*	Above or below the 75th percentile of 2022 rates	2022
Connecticut*	25th-50th percentile of 2018 rates	2019/2020/2021
Delaware*	85% of the 75th percentile of 2021 rates	2022
District of Columbia*	Based on cost modeling, not market survey	2022
Florida*	Locally determined	Varies by locality
Georgia*	Based on individual provider's private fees	2022
Hawai'i*	23rd percentile of 2022 rates	2022
Idaho*	75th-85th percentile of 2021 rates	2021
Illinois*	28th-80th percentile of 2023 rates	2022
Indiana*	11th-76th percentile of 2020 rates	2021
Iowa*	50th-75th percentile of 2020 rates	2021
Kansas*	85th percentile of 2020 rates	2021/2022
Kentucky*	80th percentile of 2020 rates	2021
Louisiana*	80th-100th percentile of 2020 rates	2022
Maine*	75th percentile of 2021 rates	2021
Maryland*	75th percentile of 2021 rates	2022
Massachusetts*	Below the 75th percentile of 2022 rates	2022
Michigan*	Above the 90th percentile of 2020 rates	2022
Minnesota*	30th-40th percentile of 2021 rates	2021
Mississippi*	Above the 75th percentile of 2021 rates	2020
Missouri*	58th percentile of 2018 rates	2019
Montana*	75th percentile of 2020 rates	2021
Nebraska*	75th percentile of 2021 rates	2022
Nevada*	95th percentile of 2018 rates	2022
New Hampshire*	55th-60th percentile of 2021 rates	2021
New Jersey*	69th-94th percentile of 2021 rates	2021
New Mexico*	Based on cost modeling, not market survey	2021
New York*	80th percentile of 2021-22 rates	2022
North Carolina*	100th percentile of 2018 rates	2022
North Dakota*	75th percentile of 2021 rates	2021
Ohio*	25th percentile of 2020 rates	2021
Oklahoma*	54th-85th percentile of 2021 rates	2018/2020/2023
Oregon*	90th percentile of 2020 rates	2022
Pennsylvania*	60th percentile of 2019 rates	2022
Rhode Island*	Above or below the 75th percentile of 2021 rates	2022/2023
South Carolina*	75th-95th percentile of 2020 rates	2021
South Dakota*	75th percentile of 2021 rates	2022
Tennessee*	65th-93rd percentile of 2021-22 rates	2022
Texas*	75th-99th percentile of 2022 rates	2022
Utah*	75th-80th percentile of 2021 rates	2021
Vermont*	75th percentile of 2019 rates	2022
Virginia*	Based on cost modeling, not market survey	2022
Washington*	16% above the 85th percentile of 2018 rates	2022
West Virginia*	75th percentile of 2021 rates	2021
Wisconsin*	80th percentile of 2022 rates	2022
Wyoming*	75th percentile of 2017 rates	2021

TABLE 4B

State Payment Rates Compared to the 75th Percentile of Current Market Rates in 2001, 2022, and 2023

	RATES EQUAL TO OR ABOVE THE 75TH PERCENTILE OF CURRENT MARKET RATES...		
	IN 2023?	IN 2022?	IN 2001?
Alabama	Yes	No	Yes
Alaska	No	No	No
Arizona	No	No	No
Arkansas	No	No	Yes
California	No	No	Yes
Colorado	No	No	Yes
Connecticut	No	No	No
Delaware	No	No	No
District of Columbia*	No	No	No
Florida*	No	No	Yes
Georgia*	N/A	N/A	No
Hawai'i*	No	Yes	No
Idaho	Yes	Yes	Yes
Illinois	No	No	No
Indiana	No	No	Yes
Iowa*	No	No	No
Kansas*	Yes	Yes	No
Kentucky	Yes	Yes	Yes
Louisiana*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maine	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maryland	Yes	No	Yes
Massachusetts	No	No	No
Michigan*	Yes	Yes	No
Minnesota*	No	No	Yes
Mississippi*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Missouri	No	No	No
Montana*	No	Yes	No
Nebraska*	Yes	No	No
Nevada*	No	No	Yes
New Hampshire*	No	No	No
New Jersey*	No	No	No
New Mexico*	No	No	No
New York*	Yes	No	Yes
North Carolina*	No	No	No
North Dakota*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ohio	No	No	No
Oklahoma	No	No	No
Oregon*	No	No	No
Pennsylvania	No	No	No
Rhode Island	No	No	Yes
South Carolina*	No	Yes	No
South Dakota*	Yes	No	Yes
Tennessee	No	No	No
Texas*	Yes	No	Yes
Utah*	Yes	Yes	No
Vermont	No	No	No
Virginia	No	No	No
Washington*	No	No	No
West Virginia*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wisconsin*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wyoming	No	No	Yes

TABLE 4C

Change in State Base Payment Rates Between 2022 and 2023

		CENTER CARE FOR A 4-YEAR-OLD			CENTER CARE FOR A 1-YEAR-OLD		
		Monthly state base payment rate in 2022	Monthly state base payment rate in 2023	Change in base payment rate 2022 to 2023	Monthly state base payment rate in 2022	Monthly state base payment rate in 2023	Change in base payment rate 2022 to 2023
Alabama*	Huntsville	$541	$662	$121	$598	$714	$117
Alaska*	Anchorage	$755	$1,019	$264	$980	$1,135	$155
Arizona*	Maricopa County	$736	$883	$147	$999	$999	$0
Arkansas*	Urban Areas	$650	$650	$0	$725	$725	$0
California	Los Angeles County	$1,253	$1,253	$0	$1,688	$1,688	$0
Colorado*	Denver County	$983	$1,074	$91	$1,383	$1,445	$62
Connecticut*	North Central Region	$879	$879	$0	$1,321	$1,321	$0
Delaware*	New Castle County	$743	$895	$152	$855	$1,038	$183
District of Columbia*	Citywide	$1,541	$1,166	-$375	$2,215	$1,676	-$539
Florida*	Miami-Dade County	$606	$606	$0	$883	$883	$0
Georgia*	Zone 1	$537	$593	$56	$624	$688	$65
Hawai'i*	Statewide	$1,200	$795	-$405	$2,000	$1,733	-$267
Idaho*	Cluster 3	$877	$877	$0	$1,039	$1,039	$0
Illinois*	Metropolitan Region	$909	$996	$87	$1,321	$1,451	$130
Indiana*	Marion County	$914	$914	$0	$1,159	$1,159	$0
Iowa*	Statewide	$748	$748	$0	$849	$849	$0
Kansas*	Sedgwick County	$830	$813	-$17	$963	$931	-$32
Kentucky*	Jefferson County	$888	$888	$0	$1,018	$1,018	$0
Louisiana*	Statewide	$682	$682	$0	$909	$909	$0
Maine	Cumberland County	$1,139	$1,139	$0	$1,312	$1,312	$0
Maryland*	Region W	$935	$1,134	$199	$1,299	$1,602	$303
Massachusetts*	Northeast (Region 3)	$1,081	$1,190	$110	$1,719	$1,938	$219
Michigan*	Statewide	$1,169	$1,091	-$78	$1,637	$1,593	-$44
Minnesota*	Hennepin County	$1,147	$1,147	$0	$1,585	$1,585	$0
Mississippi*	Statewide	$550	$550	$0	$600	$600	$0
Missouri*	St. Louis	$628	$628	$0	$816	$816	$0
Montana*	Statewide	$866	$866	$0	$974	$974	$0
Nebraska*	Urban Counties	$888	$974	$87	$1,083	$1,191	$108
Nevada*	Clark County	$779	$1,115	$336	$909	$1,353	$444
New Hampshire*	Statewide	$939	$939	$0	$1,191	$1,191	$0
New Jersey*	Statewide	$1,207	$1,207	$0	$1,524	$1,524	$0
New Mexico*	Statewide	$575	$575	$0	$880	$880	$0
New York*	New York City	$1,251	$1,407	$156	$1,758	$1,758	$0
North Carolina*	Mecklenburg County	$881	$981	$100	$963	$1,219	$256
North Dakota*	Statewide	$811	$811	$0	$913	$913	$0
Ohio*	Franklin County	$779	$779	$0	$993	$993	$0
Oklahoma*	Statewide	$476	$476	$0	$541	$541	$0
Oregon*	Group Area A	$1,229	$1,400	$171	$1,568	$1,705	$137
Pennsylvania*	Philadelphia	$862	$862	$0	$996	$996	$0
Rhode Island*	Statewide	$899	$974	$76	$1,023	$1,147	$124
South Carolina*	Urban	$827	$827	$0	$922	$922	$0
South Dakota*	Minnehaha County	$741	$838	$97	$819	$955	$136
Tennessee*	Top Tier Counties	$576	$693	$117	$849	$1,018	$169
Texas*	Gulf Coast Area	$736	$823	$87	$922	$927	$4
Utah*	Statewide	$752	$752	$0	$1,040	$1,040	$0
Vermont*	Statewide	$887	$1,191	$304	$1,039	$1,256	$217
Virginia*	Fairfax County	$1,516	$1,516	$0	$1,775	$2,035	$260
Washington*	King County	$1,555	$1,804	$249	$1,722	$1,998	$276
West Virginia*	Statewide	$693	$693	$0	$779	$779	$0
Wisconsin*	Milwaukee County	$1,196	$1,196	$0	$1,491	$1,491	$0
Wyoming*	Statewide	$650	$650	$0	$746	$746	$0

TABLE 4D

State Payment Rates in 2023 Compared to Market Rates for Child Care Centers

		CENTER CARE FOR A 4-YEAR-OLD					CENTER CARE FOR A 1-YEAR-OLD				
		Monthly state payment rate	75th percentile of market rates	Year of market rates	Difference between state rate and 75th percentile	Percentage difference between state rate and 75th percentile	Monthly state payment rate	75th percentile of market rates	Year of market rates	Difference between state rate and 75th percentile	Percentage difference between state rate and 75th percentile
Alabama*	Huntsville	$675	$662	2021	$13	2%	$727	$714	2021	$13	2%
Alaska*	Anchorage	$1,019	$1,073	2020-21	-$54	-5%	$1,135	$1,217	2020-21	-$82	-7%
Arizona*	Maricopa County	$1,325	$1,091	2022	$234	21%	$1,499	$1,217	2022	$282	23%
Arkansas*	Urban Areas	$693	$714	2023	-$22	-3%	$758	$801	2023	-$43	-5%
California	Los Angeles County	$1,253	$1,328	2021	-$75	-6%	$1,688	$1,752	2021	-$64	-4%
Colorado*	Denver County	$1,373	$1,481	2022	-$108	-7%	$2,035	$1,949	2022	$87	4%
Connecticut	North Central Region	$879	$1,347	2022	-$468	-35%	$1,321	$1,624	2022	-$303	-19%
Delaware*	New Castle County	$895	$1,061	2021	-$165	-16%	$1,038	$1,221	2021	-$183	-15%
District of Columbia*	Citywide	$1,212	$2,186	2022	-$974	-45%	$1,732	$2,414	2022	-$682	-28%
Florida*	Miami-Dade County	$778	$909	2022-23	-$131	-14%	$883	$996	2022-23	-$113	-11%
Georgia*	Zone 1	$801	$984	2021	-$183	-19%	$929	$1,083	2021	-$153	-14%
Hawai'i*	Statewide	$795	$1,210	2023	-$415	-34%	$1,733	$2,260	2023	-$527	-23%
Idaho*	Cluster 3	$877	$877	2021	$0	0%	$1,039	$960	2021	$79	8%
Illinois*	Metropolitan Region	$996	$1,976	2023	-$980	-50%	$1,451	$2,523	2023	-$1,073	-43%
Indiana*	Marion County	$1,278	$1,065	2020	$213	20%	$1,621	$1,342	2020	$279	21%
Iowa*	Statewide	$748	$880	2020	-$132	-15%	$849	$1,021	2020	-$172	-17%
Kansas*	Sedgwick County	$813	$748	2020	$65	9%	$931	$905	2020	$26	3%
Kentucky*	Jefferson County	$888	$844	2020	$44	5%	$1,018	$953	2020	$65	7%
Louisiana	Statewide	$682	$650	2020	$32	5%	$909	$672	2020	$237	35%
Maine*	Cumberland County	$1,139	$1,139	2021	$0	0%	$1,312	$1,083	2021	$229	21%
Maryland*	Region W	$1,134	$1,134	2021	$0	0%	$1,602	$1,602	2021	$0	0%
Massachusetts*	Northeast (Region 3)	$1,190	$1,600	2022	-$410	-26%	$1,938	$2,252	2022	-$314	-14%
Michigan*	Statewide	$1,354	$1,039	2020	$316	30%	$1,812	$1,216	2020	$596	49%
Minnesota*	Hennepin County	$1,377	$1,438	2021	-$61	-4%	$1,902	$1,849	2021	$53	3%
Mississippi*	Statewide	$550	$541	2021	$9	2%	$600	$585	2021	$15	3%
Missouri*	St. Louis	$628	$866	2022	-$238	-28%	$816	$1,176	2022	-$360	-31%
Montana*	Statewide	$866	$1,056	2023	-$190	-18%	$974	$1,188	2023	-$214	-18%
Nebraska*	Urban Counties	$974	$974	2021	$0	0%	$1,191	$1,191	2021	$0	0%
Nevada*	Clark County	$1,137	$1,173	2022	-$37	-3%	$1,375	$1,334	2022	$41	3%
New Hampshire*	Statewide	$939	$1,034	2021	-$95	-9%	$1,191	$1,277	2021	-$87	-7%
New Jersey*	Statewide	$1,207	$1,260	2021	-$53	-4%	$1,524	$1,455	2021	$69	5%
New Mexico*	Statewide	$925	$894	2018	$31	3%	$1,520	$998	2018	$522	52%
New York*	New York City	$1,407	$1,386	2022	$22	2%	$1,758	$1,667	2022	$91	5%
North Carolina*	Mecklenburg County	$1,131	$1,317	2021	-$186	-14%	$1,278	$1,473	2021	-$195	-13%
North Dakota*	Statewide	$811	$811	2021	$0	0%	$913	$913	2021	$0	0%
Ohio*	Franklin County	$851	$1,169	2022	-$318	-27%	$1,084	$1,425	2022	-$340	-24%
Oklahoma*	Statewide	$736	$758	2021	-$22	-3%	$1,150	$1,039	2021	$111	11%
Oregon*	Group Area A	$1,400	$1,575	2022	-$175	-11%	$1,705	$2,085	2022	-$380	-18%
Pennsylvania*	Philadelphia	$862	$919	2019	-$57	-6%	$996	$1,083	2019	-$87	-8%
Rhode Island*	Statewide	$974	$1,083	2021	-$108	-10%	$1,147	$1,156	2021	-$9	-1%
South Carolina*	Urban	$866	$827	2020	$39	5%	$966	$922	2020	$43	5%
South Dakota*	Minnehaha County	$838	$840	2021	-$2	0%	$955	$955	2021	$0	0%
Tennessee*	Top Tier Counties	$831	$886	2021-22	-$55	-6%	$1,221	$1,083	2021-22	$139	13%
Texas*	Gulf Coast Area	$823	$805	2022	$17	2%	$927	$896	2022	$30	3%
Utah*	Statewide	$752	$752	2021	$0	0%	$1,040	$999	2021	$41	4%
Vermont*	Statewide	$1,299	$1,191	2019	$108	9%	$1,360	$1,256	2019	$104	8%
Virginia*	Fairfax County	$1,516	$1,559	2018	-$43	-3%	$2,035	$1,819	2018	$217	12%
Washington*	King County	$1,948	$1,763	2021	$185	10%	$2,158	$2,050	2021	$108	5%
West Virginia*	Statewide	$693	$693	2021	$0	0%	$779	$758	2021	$22	3%
Wisconsin*	Milwaukee County	$1,196	$1,148	2022	$48	4%	$1,491	$1,478	2022	$13	1%
Wyoming*	Statewide	$650	$779	2022	-$130	-17%	$746	$866	2022	-$120	-14%

TABLE 4E

State Tiered Payment Rates for Center Care for a 4-Year-Old in 2023

		Number of quality tier levels (including base rate)	Payment rate for lowest tier	Payment rate for highest tier	Payment rates between lowest and highest tiers	Difference between lowest and highest tiers	Percentage difference between lowest and highest tiers	75th percentile of market rates	Difference between highest rate and 75th percentile	Percentage difference between highest rate and 75th percentile
Alabama*	Huntsville	6	$662	$732	$675, $688, $701, $719	$69	10%	$662	$69	10%
Alaska	Anchorage	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Arizona*	Maricopa County	2	$883	$1,325	N/A	$442	50%	$1,091	$234	21%
Arkansas*	Urban Areas	3	$650	$866	$693	$217	33%	$714	$152	21%
California	Los Angeles County	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Colorado*	Denver County	3	$1,074	$1,373	$1,112	$299	28%	$1,481	-$108	-7%
Connecticut*	North Central Region	2	$879	$1,099	N/A	$220	25%	$1,347	-$248	-18%
Delaware*	New Castle County	3	$895	$1,107	$1,017	$212	24%	$1,061	$47	4%
District of Columbia*	Citywide	4	$1,166	$1,396	$1,212, $1,343	$230	20%	$2,186	-$790	-36%
Florida*	Miami-Dade County	8	$606	$800	$630, $649, $667, $727, $757, $778	$194	32%	$996	-$196	-20%
Georgia*	Zone 1	5	$593	$919	$682, $742, $801	$326	55%	$984	-$65	-7%
Hawai'i*	Statewide	2	$795	$980	N/A	$185	23%	$1,525	-$545	-36%
Idaho	Cluster 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Illinois*	Metropolitan Region	3	$996	$1,145	$1,095	$149	15%	$1,976	-$831	-42%
Indiana*	Marion County	4	$914	$1,278	$1,097, $1,190	$364	40%	$1,065	$213	20%
Iowa*	Statewide	4	$748	$880	$792, $835	$132	18%	$880	$0	0%
Kansas	Sedgwick County	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kentucky*	Jefferson County	4	$888	$1,039	See notes	$151	17%	$844	$195	23%
Louisiana*	Statewide	4	$682	$839	$757, $795	$157	23%	$650	$189	29%
Maine*	Cumberland County	4	$1,139	$1,310	$1,173, $1,253	$171	15%	$1,139	$171	15%
Maryland*	Region W	4	$1,134	$1,429	$1,248, $1,350	$295	26%	$1,134	$295	26%
Massachusetts*	Northeast (Region 3)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Michigan*	Statewide	5	$1,091	$1,627	$1,179, $1,354, $1,452	$536	49%	$1,039	$588	57%
Minnesota*	Hennepin County	3	$1,147	$1,377	$1,320	$229	20%	$1,438	-$61	-4%
Mississippi	Statewide	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Missouri*	St. Louis	2	$628	$753	N/A	$126	20%	$866	-$113	-13%
Montana*	Statewide	5	$866	$1,039	$909, $953, $996	$173	20%	$1,056	-$17	-2%
Nebraska*	Urban Counties	4	$974	$1,128	$1,023, $1,075	$154	16%	$974	$154	16%
Nevada*	Clark County	5	$1,115	$1,202	$1,137, $1,158, $1,180	$87	8%	$1,173	$28	2%
New Hampshire*	Statewide	3	$939	$1,032	$986	$94	10%	$1,034	-$1	0%
New Jersey*	Statewide	5	$1,207	$1,334	$1,253, $1,264, $1,294	$127	11%	$1,260	$74	6%
New Mexico*	Statewide	4	$575	$925	$675, $825	$350	61%	$894	$31	3%
New York*	New York City	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Carolina*	Mecklenburg County	4	$477	$1,131	$981, $1,038	$654	137%	$1,317	-$186	-14%
North Dakota	Statewide	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ohio*	Franklin County	7	$779	$1,094	$811, $851, $956, $981, $1,046	$315	40%	$1,169	-$75	-6%
Oklahoma*	Statewide	5	$476	$736	$509, $602, $654	$260	55%	$758	-$22	-3%
Oregon*	Group Area A	4	$1,400	$1,490	$1,454, $1,472	$90	6%	$1,575	-$85	-5%
Pennsylvania*	Philadelphia	4	$862	$1,061	$882, $989	$199	23%	$919	$142	15%
Rhode Island*	Statewide	5	$974	$1,126	$1,018, $1,052, $1,083	$152	16%	$1,083	$43	4%
South Carolina*	Urban	5	$827	$1,186	$866, $944, $1,048	$359	43%	$827	$359	43%
South Dakota	Minnehaha County	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tennessee*	Top Tier Counties	4	$693	$831	$727, $797	$139	20%	$886	-$55	-6%
Texas*	Gulf Coast Area	4	$823	$899	$864, $881	$76	9%	$805	$94	12%
Utah*	Statewide	3	$752	$952	$927	$200	27%	$752	$200	27%
Vermont*	Statewide	5	$1,191	$1,407	$1,212, $1,247, $1,299	$217	18%	$1,191	$217	18%
Virginia*	Fairfax County	2	$1,516	$1,622	N/A	$106	7%	$1,559	$63	4%
Washington*	King County	5	$1,804	$2,164	$1,840, $1,948, $2,074	$361	20%	$1,763	$401	23%
West Virginia*	Statewide	3	$693	$823	$758	$130	19%	$693	$130	19%
Wisconsin*	Milwaukee County	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wyoming	Statewide	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

NOTES FOR TABLES 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, AND 4E: PAYMENT RATES

State payment rates are compared to the 75th percentile of market rates (the rate designed to allow families access to 75 percent of providers in their community) because federal regulations recommend that rates be set at this level. In this report, a state's payment rates are only considered to be at the federally recommended level if rates for all (or nearly all) categories—such as different regions, age groups, types of care, and quality levels (including the base rate)—are at or above the 75th percentile of current market rates.

In this report, a state is considered to have rates that were based on current market prices if the market survey used to set its rates was conducted no more than two years earlier (so, for example, rates used in 2023 are considered current if set at the 75th percentile of 2021 or more recent market rates).

States were asked to report payment rates and the 75th percentile of market rates for their most populous city, county, or region. Monthly rates were calculated from hourly, daily, and weekly rates assuming the child was in care 9 hours a day, 5 days a week, 4.33 weeks a month.

Changes in payment rates between 2022 and 2023, differences between state payment rates and the 75th percentile, and differentials between the lowest and highest tiered payment rates were calculated using raw data, rather than the rounded numbers shown in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e.

For states that pay higher rates for higher-quality care, the base rate for each state is used for the data analysis in Table 4c, and the most common rate level (the level representing the greatest number of providers) for each state is used for the data analysis in Table 4d, unless otherwise indicated. The rates analyzed in the tables do not reflect other types of higher rates or rate enhancements, such as higher rates paid for care for children with special needs or care during nontraditional hours.

Data in the tables for 2023 reflect policies as of February 2023, data in the tables for 2022 reflect policies as of February 2022, and data in the tables for 2001 reflect policies as of June 2001, unless otherwise indicated. Certain changes in policies since February 2023 are noted below.

ALABAMA: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased base and tiered payment rates as of April 2022.

ALASKA: The payment rates in Tables 4c and 4d reflect that the state increased payment rates as of January 2023.

ARIZONA: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased all base payment rates to the 75th percentile of 2018 market rates as of November 2022; prior to that, payment rates were set at the 75th percentile of 2018 market rates for care for children birth through age 2 and the 50th percentile of 2018 market rates for care for children ages 3 and older. The payment rates in Tables 4d and 4e also reflect that, as of November 2022, the state increased tiered rates for providers that are accredited or that have a three-, four-, or five-star rating under the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has five levels) from 35 percent to 50 percent above the base rate; tiered rates for certified family child care and in-home providers with a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential were increased from 20 percent to 35 percent above the base rate. As of April 2023, the state—which had been using different rates for each of six different districts—began using statewide rates, and set these statewide rates based on market rates in Maricopa County (the region with the highest child care costs); base payment rates were increased to the 75th percentile of 2022 market rates for care for infants under age 1, and set at the 75th percentile of 2018 market rates for care for children ages 1 through 12.

ARKANSAS: The state began providing higher payment rates for higher-quality care under the state's quality rating and improvement system (which at that time had three star levels) in June 2014, then began requiring all providers serving families receiving child care assistance to have a rating of one star or higher as of January 2016, and now requires all providers serving families receiving child care assistance to have a rating of two stars or higher as of July 2022. The state increased payment rates for two- and three-star providers and added higher payment rate tiers for new quality levels (four-, five-, and six-star levels) in the state's quality rating and improvement system as of July 2023.

CALIFORNIA: The state last increased payment rates for licensed care, from at least the 75th percentile of 2016 market rates to the 75th percentile of 2018 market rates (unless existing rates were higher, in which case they were not changed), as of January 2022. Payment rates for license-exempt family child care have been set at 70 percent of payment rates for licensed family child care since January 2017.

COLORADO: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased base and tiered payment rates based on the 2022 market rate survey as of October 2022.

CONNECTICUT: The state set payment rates at least at the 50th percentile of 2018 market rates for child care centers, group child care homes, and license-exempt relative providers serving infants and toddlers, and at least at the 25th percentile for child care centers, group child care homes, and license-exempt relative providers serving preschool-age children as of September 2019. Then, as a result of union contract negotiations, the state increased rates for licensed family child care by 2.5 percent and license-exempt relative providers by 1.25 percent as of July 2019, and again increased rates for licensed family child care by 2.5 percent and license-exempt relative providers by 1.25 percent as of July 2020. The state increased the bonus for accredited care from 5 percent to 25 percent of the base rate as of May 2021. Most recently, the state increased payment rates by 11 percent for licensed providers and 6 percent for license-exempt relative care as of July 2023.

DELAWARE: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased base rates to 85 percent of the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates as of July 2022. The payment rates in Table 4e also reflect that the state reduced the number of payment rate tiers in New Castle County for care for children under age 6 from four in 2022 to three in 2023. (Prior to 2023, providers at quality levels one and two of the state's quality rating and improvement system, which has five levels, received the base rate; in 2023, providers in New Castle County caring for children under age 6 at quality level three received the base rate as well.) The state increased base rates to 100 percent of the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates as of July 2023. The state stopped using tiered rates at the end of June 2024.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: The city temporarily increased payment rates from November 2020 through September 2021. As of October 2021, the city established new payment rates, which were lower than the temporary payment rates but higher than rates prior to November 2020. The city then temporarily increased payment rates again (to levels higher than during the previous temporary increase) from January through June 2022. The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that, as of July 2022, rates returned to the previous levels that had been set in regulation in October 2021. The city increased rates as of October 2023; these new rates were still below the temporary rates in effect from January to June 2022. Also note that the city sets its payment rates based on a cost estimation model, which assesses the cost of delivering child care services at different levels of quality, in different settings, and serving children of differing ages and needs.

FLORIDA: Local early learning coalitions determine their payment rates and when to update them. The state's tiered payment rate levels include the base level and a level for programs with a Gold Seal Quality Care designation, as well as levels that are 4 percent, 7 percent, and 10 percent above the base level or Gold Seal level for those providers that achieve certain scores using CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System®). The state's market rate survey differentiates between quality levels and the 75th percentile of market rates is obtained for providers at the base level and at the Gold Seal level; in Table 4d, the payment rate for the most common rate level is compared to the 75th percentile for providers without a Gold Seal, and in Table 4e, the payment rate for the highest quality level is compared to the 75th percentile for Gold Seal providers.

GEORGIA: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect the state's published rates, which were set based on the 2021 market rate survey as of July 2022. However, from May 2021 through September 2024, the state is paying providers based on the fees they charge to private-paying parents, regardless of whether these fees are higher or lower than the state's published rates. During this time, the state calculates a provider's tiered bonus based on the state's published rates, and adds that bonus to the fee the provider charges private-paying parents. (Providers with a provisional or probationary status in the state's quality rating and improvement system receive a 15 percent bonus, one-star providers receive a 25 percent bonus, two-star providers receive a 35 percent bonus, and three-star providers receive a 55 percent bonus.) Also note that during the time the state is paying providers based on their published fees, providers cannot increase the fees they charge to families receiving child care assistance, but the state did increase the amount they paid to providers by 7.87 percent (above the provider's published fee) as of October 2022, and 4.3 percent on top of that as of January 2024. Zone 1 includes Camden, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Paulding, and Rockdale Counties.

HAWAI'I: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that reflect that as of June 2022, after a temporary increase in rates that was in effect from August 2020 to June 2022, payment rates returned to lower levels that had previously been in effect. Also note that the state has higher rates for accredited center care for children over age 24 months through the time the children are eligible to enroll in kindergarten or junior kindergarten (usually age 5 by the end of the calendar year, depending on the child's birth date). The state began implementing higher rates for accredited family child care as of August 2021. The state does not have accredited rates for center care for infants and toddlers. For center care for preschool-age children, the state's market rate survey differentiates between quality levels and the 75th percentile of market rates is obtained for providers at each quality level; in Table 4d, the payment rate for the base level (the most common rate level) is compared to the 75th percentile for that same quality level, and in Table 4e, the payment rate for the highest quality level (the accredited rate) is compared to the 75th percentile for that quality level.

IDAHO: The state last increased payment rates as of October 2021. Also note that Cluster 3 includes Ada, Blaine, Latah, and Teton Counties.

ILLINOIS: Payment rates vary as a percentile of market rates by the age of the child, type of care, and region. Payment rates are reported for the Metropolitan Region (referred to as Group 1A), which includes Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, and McHenry Counties. The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased rates in July 2022 and again in December 2022.

INDIANA: Payment rates vary as a percentile of market rates by the age of the child, type of care, and county. The state increased all payment rates in May 2014. It then increased payment rates for license-exempt providers in September 2015; increased payment rates for providers at levels two, three, and four of the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has four levels) in September 2016; and increased rates for infant and toddler care in June 2019 and again in September 2019. The state temporarily increased payment rates by 20 percent as of April 2021, and this payment rate increase remained in effect until July 2023, when the state enacted new, higher payment rates.

IOWA: Payment rates were set at the 50th to 75th percentile of 2020 market rates, depending on the tiered rate level, as of July 2021. Payment rates were increased, so that they range from the 60th to 80th percentile, depending on the tiered rate level, as of March 2023. Also note that the state calculates payments based on units of care; a unit is a half day (up to 5 hours of service per 24-hour period), so 9 hours of care a day, 5 days a week, 4.33 weeks a month would equal 44 units.

KANSAS: The state set rates for all age groups, on average (across counties), at the 85th percentile of 2020 market rates as of October 2021. The payment rates in Tables 4c and 4d reflect that the state adjusted age groupings and adjusted rates accordingly for each of the new age groups to the 85th percentile of 2020 market rates as of April 2022. (These adjustments resulted in decreases in payment rates for some age groups.) The state adjusted payment rates based on the cost of care as of December 2023.

KENTUCKY: Under the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has five levels), the amount of the bonus at each quality level varies by the type of care and the age of the child. For example, for care for 4-year-olds, the bonus above the base rate is $23 per month for three-star licensed centers, $33 per month for four-star licensed centers, and $43 per month for five-star licensed centers. (One- and two-star providers do not receive a bonus above the base rate.) In addition, accredited providers can receive, to the extent funds are available, an add-on on top of their quality bonus. The highest rate shown in Table 4e assumes that the provider was at the five-star level and was accredited. The highest rate shown in Table 4e reflects that the add-on for accredited providers was increased from $2 per day to $5 per day as of August 2022. The state last increased base payment rates in October 2021.

LOUISIANA: The state increased base payment rates as of February 2022. Payment rates were above the 100th percentile of 2020 market rates for care for infants, above the 95th percentile for care for toddlers, above the 80th percentile for center care for preschoolers, and above the 95th percentile for family child care for preschoolers. Also note that, although shown in Table 4e as incorporated into the monthly payment rate, bonuses for higher-quality care are paid quarterly. The bonuses are 11 percent above the base rate for a center at the three-star level of the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has five levels), 16.5 percent above the base rate for four-star centers, and 23 percent above the base rate for five-star centers.

MAINE: The state increased base payment rates from the 75th percentile of 2018 market rates to at least the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates as of July 2021. The state temporarily increased tiered rate differentials—from 2 percent to 3 percent above the base rate for providers at step two of the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has four levels), from 5 percent to 10 percent above the base rate for providers at step three, and from 10 percent to 15 percent above the base rate for providers at step four—from October 2021 through September 2023.

MARYLAND: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased rates from the 60th percentile of 2019 market rates to the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates as of May 2022. Region W includes Anne Arundel, Calvert, Carroll, Charles, and Prince George's Counties.

MASSACHUSETTS: Payment rates vary as a percentile of market rates by the age of the child, type of care, and region. The payment rates in Tables 4c and 4d reflect that the state increased payment rates for centers by 1.5 percent, then increased all rates for centers to at least the 30th percentile of 2022 market rates, and began paying an 8.5 percent quality add-on to all centers as of November 2022 (retroactive to July 2022). The state increased payment rates for centers again as of February 2024 (retroactive to July 2023); with this increase, the 8.5 percent quality add-on is incorporated into the base rate. Also note that, prior to February 2024, the state paid higher rates (3 percent above the base rate) for center care and family child care at level two or above of the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has four levels) for children up to 2.9 years old; as of February 2024, this 3 percent quality add-on for care for infants and toddlers is incorporated into the base rate and providers no longer need a quality rating to receive it.

MICHIGAN: The state temporarily increased payment rates by 40 percent from September 2020 through September 2021. As of October 2021, the state set payment rates equal to 30 percent above the rates in place prior to September 2020. The state then implemented an additional temporary increase of 50 percent from October 2021 to April 2022. The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that, from April 2022 to September 2023, payment rates were set at levels that were 40 percent higher than rates in place prior to September 2020, and that, from October 2022 to September 2023, payment rates for school-age care and care for infants and toddlers were then increased by 5 cents per hour above that level. As of September 24, 2023, payment rates were set at 10 percent above the rate level set in October 2021 (which was 30 percent above pre-September 2020 rates).

MINNESOTA: The state set base payment rates at the 40th percentile of 2021 market rates for care for infants and toddlers and the 30th percentile of 2021 market rates for care for preschool- and school-age children (if not already at or above those levels) as of November 2021. The state increased payment rates for care for all age groups to the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates (if not already at or above that level) as of October 2023.

MISSISSIPPI: The state increased payment rates as of April 2020. While the increase was initially intended to be temporary, the higher rates were made permanent as of November 2021. The payment rates that went into effect in April 2020 were statewide rates. New payment rates effective as of July 2023 differentiated between metro counties and non-metro counties; payment rates for metro counties were set at the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates in metro counties and payment rates for non-metro counties were set at the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates in non-metro counties.

MISSOURI: The state increased base payment rates to the 58th percentile of 2022 market rates as of July 2023.

MONTANA: Although shown in Table 4e as incorporated into the monthly payment rate, bonuses for higher-quality care are paid based on children's attendance; the base payment rate is paid based on enrollment. Also note that data on the state's policies as of 2001 are not available, so data on policies as of March 2000 are used instead for Table 4b.

NEBRASKA: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased base rates from at least the 60th percentile of 2021 market rates to the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates as of July 2022. The state increased payment rates to the 75th percentile of 2023 market rates as of July 2023. Also note that, under the state's tiered rates system, non-accredited providers are paid at the base rate if they do not participate in the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has five levels) or are at step one or two of the system, 5 percent above the base rate once they reach step three, 5 percent above the rate for step three once they reach step four, and 5 percent above the rate for step four once they reach step five; accredited providers are paid at a rate equivalent to the step-three rate for non-accredited providers if they do not participate in the quality rating and improvement system or are at step one, two, or three, 5 percent above the rate for step three once they reach step four, and 5 percent above the rate for step four once they reach step five. Urban Counties include Dakota, Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties.

NEVADA: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased base rates for licensed providers (other than Head Start/wrap-around and out-of-school-time providers) from the 55th percentile of 2018 market rates to the 95th percentile of 2018 market rates as of May 2022. (Payment rates for Head Start/wrap-around providers were increased as of July 2022 and payment rates for out-of-school-time and out-of-school recreational providers were increased as of July 2023.) The state increased payment rates for family, friend, and neighbor care providers to 75 percent of the base rate for the licensed family child care providers as of January 2023.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: The state increased payment rates to the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates as of July 2023.

NEW JERSEY: Payment rates vary as a percentile of market rates by the age of the child and type of care. The state increased payment rates for center care by $200 per month as of November 2021, and increased payment rates for registered family child care and approved home providers by $200 per month as of December 2021. The rates in the tables also reflect temporary supplemental payments of $300 per month for all providers that were implemented as of September 2020; these payments, now referred to as differential payments, were discontinued for approved homes (family, friend, and neighbor and in-home providers) as of December 2021, but are expected to continue for other providers through June 2024. In addition, the state increased payment rates by 2 percent as of March 2023. The state has tiered rates for accredited care provided by centers, school-age care providers, and family child care homes. The state also has tiered rates for providers with three-, four-, and five-star ratings under the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has five levels) and serving infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children; previously, these tiered rates were only available to centers, but the state established tiered rates for family child care providers as of March 2022. Also note that data on the state's policies as of 2001 are not available, so data on policies as of March 2000 are used instead for Table 4b.

NEW MEXICO: The state increased base and tiered payment rates based on a cost estimation model, and reduced the number of rate tiers from five to four, as of July 2021. The state increased payment rates again as of August 2023. Also note that the state last conducted a market rate survey in 2018; a more recent market rate survey is not available because the state uses a cost estimation model rather than a market rate survey to set its rates.

NEW YORK: The payment rates in Tables 4c and 4d reflect that the state increased payment rates from the 69th percentile of 2017-18 rates to the 80th percentile of 2021-2022 market rates (if not already at or above that level) as of June 2022. Also note that local social services districts may set payment rates for accredited providers that are up to 15 percent higher than base rates; New York City has not offered this tiered rate since May 2018.

NORTH CAROLINA: The state's market rate survey differentiates between quality levels and the 75th percentile of market rates is obtained for providers at each quality level of the state's quality rating and improvement system; in Table 4d, the payment rate for the most common rate level is compared to the 75th percentile for that same quality level, and in Table 4e, the payment rate for the highest quality level is compared to the 75th percentile for that quality level. There are five star levels in the state's quality rating and improvement system, which is mandatory for all licensed providers, except those that are religious sponsored. One- and two-star providers are no longer eligible to serve children receiving child care assistance. Religious-sponsored providers not participating in the quality rating and improvement system are paid at the rate previously used for one-star providers; this rate was set based on 2003 market rate survey data. While Table 4c shows the base rate for most states, the rate for three-star centers is shown for North Carolina since the state generally requires providers to be at least that quality level to serve children receiving child care assistance. Also note that the state's 100 counties are ranked based on economic well-being and assigned a tier designation, with the 40 most distressed counties designated as tier one, the next 40 as tier two, and the 20 least distressed as tier three; Mecklenburg County is a tier three county. The state increased payment rates for three-, four-, and five-star licensed care for children birth through age 2 in tier three counties, as well as for school-age children in tier one and tier two counties, to the 75th percentile of 2015 market rates as of October 2017. The state then increased payment rates for three-, four-, and five-star licensed care for children ages 3 through 5 in tier three counties to the 75th percentile of 2015 market rates, and increased payment rates for three-, four-, and five-star licensed care for children birth through age 5 in tier one and tier two counties to the 100th percentile of 2015 market rates, as of October 2018. The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased payment rates to the 100th percentile of 2018 market rates for three-, four-, and five-star licensed care for all age groups in all counties as of October 2022. The state increased all payment rates based on the 2021 market rate survey as of October 2023.

NORTH DAKOTA: The state increased payment rates from the 75th percentile of 2017 market rates to the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates as of September 2021. The state increased payment rates for care for infants and toddlers by 40 percent as of August 2023.

OHIO: The state increased base payment rates from at least the 25th percentile of 2018 market rates to at least the 25th percentile of 2020 market rates as of July 2021. The state increased base payment rates to the 35th percentile of 2022 market rates as of July 2023.

OKLAHOMA: Payment rates vary as a percentile of market rates by the age of the child and type of care. Table 4e reflects that the state added a five-star level to its quality rating and improvement system as of January 2023; the state now has one-star, two-star, three-star, four-star, and five-star levels. (The one-star level is the basic licensing level and the base payment rate level.) Previously, the state's quality rating and improvement system had four levels: one-star, one-star plus, two-star, and three-star. As of August 2018, the state increased payment rates for two- and three-star care for children birth through age 3 to the 65th percentile of 2017 market rates and increased payment rates for all other categories of care, except for one-star centers, by 7 percent. As of April 2020, payment rates for one-star centers and family child care homes were increased to the 50th percentile of 2017 market rates; payment rates for care for children birth through age 3 in three-star centers and family child care homes care were increased to the 75th percentile of 2017 market rates; and all providers began receiving a rate add-on of $5 per day per child. Also note that the state's market rate survey differentiates between quality levels and the 75th percentile of market rates is obtained for providers at each quality level; in Tables 4d and 4e, the payment rate for the five-star level, which is the most common level and the highest quality level, is compared to the 75th percentile for the highest quality level in effect at the time of the survey (the three-star level).

OREGON: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased rates to the 90th percentile of 2020 market rates as of June 2022. The state increased payment rates to the 80th percentile of 2022 market rates as of January 2024. Also note that Group Area A includes the Ashland, Bend, Corvallis, Eugene, Monmouth, Portland, and Springfield areas.

PENNSYLVANIA: The state increased base payment rates to the 60th percentile of 2019 market rates as of January 2022. The state increased payment rates again as of March 2023.

RHODE ISLAND: From June 2020 through December 2021, licensed centers with a star level of less than five in the state's quality rating and improvement system were temporarily paid at the rate previously paid to five-star centers; five-star centers were temporarily paid at the 90th percentile of 2018 market rates; family child care for infants was temporarily paid at the five-star/step-four rate (the highest tiered rate for that category); and family child care for preschool- and school-age children was temporarily paid at the step-four rate (the highest tiered rate for that category). As of January 2022, the state increased payment rates for centers above the level they had been at prior to the temporary increase, and in some cases above the temporary rate levels (but in some cases below the temporary rate levels), and returned to having five separate rate tiers for centers for each of its quality (star) levels. The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased rates for centers again as July 2022. Payment rates for licensed and license-exempt family child care were increased by 2.5 percent as of January 2023.

SOUTH CAROLINA: The state's quality rating and improvement system, which is mandatory for all providers serving families receiving child care assistance, has five levels—C (which receives the base payment rate), B, B+, A, and A+. The state increased base and tiered payment rates as of October 2021 so that payment rates ranged from the 75th percentile of 2020 market rates for providers at Level C to the 95th percentile of 2020 market rates for providers at Level A+. (Previously, payment rates ranged from the 75th percentile of 2017 market rates for providers at Level C to the 90th percentile of 2017 market rates for providers at Level A+.)

SOUTH DAKOTA: The payment rates in Tables 4c and 4d reflect that the state increased rates to the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates as of July 2022.

TENNESSEE: Payment rates vary as a percentile of market rates by the age of the child, type of care, and county group. The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased rates by 20 percent as of July 2022. The state increased payment rates again, and instituted a 15 percent differential for infant and toddler care and a 5 percent quality rating and improvement transition bonus, as of October 2023. Also note that Top Tier Counties are those with the 20 highest average populations in 2019 and/or 20 highest per capita incomes in 2017-2019; these counties include: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Cheatham, Davidson, Fayette, Greene, Hamilton, Henry, Knox, Loudon, Madison, Maury, Montgomery, Putnam, Robertson, Rutherford, Sevier, Shelby, Sullivan, Sumner, Washington, Williamson, and Wilson.

TEXAS: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that, as of October 2022, the state increased base rates to the 75th percentile of 2022 market rates, and set tiered rates at 5 percent above the base rate for providers at the two-star level of the state's quality rating and improvement system, 7 percent above the base rate for three-star providers, and 9 percent above the base rate for four-star providers. (Prior to October 2022, base payment rates had been set at least at the 60th percentile of 2021 market rates for infants, 55th percentile for toddlers, and 50th percentile for preschool- and school-age children; tiered rates for four-star providers had been set at least at the 85th percentile of 2021 market rates for infants, 80th percentile for toddlers, and 75th percentile for preschool- and school-age children; payment rates for three-star providers had been set at least at 90 percent of the four-star rate; and payment rates for two-star providers had been set at least at 90 percent of the three-star rate.) The state increased base payment rates to the 75th percentile of 2023 market rates as of October 2023.

UTAH: The state set base payment rates at the 80th percentile of 2021 market rates for care for infants and the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates for all other age groups as of October 2021. The state increased base payment rates to the 90th percentile of 2021 market rates for care for children under age 2 and to the 80th percentile of 2021 market rates for care for children ages 2 and older as of February 2024. Also note that since October 2019, the state has paid bonuses for higher-quality care; licensed centers rated as high quality under the state's quality rating and improvement system receive an additional payment of $175 per month per child (based on the average number of children receiving assistance per month during the previous 12 months) and licensed centers rated as high quality plus receive an additional payment of $200 per month per child. (In addition, as of August 2022, licensed family child care providers rated as high quality receive an additional payment of $100 per month per child receiving assistance and licensed family child care providers rated as high quality plus receive an additional payment of $125 per month per child receiving assistance). Although shown in Table 4e as incorporated into the monthly payment rate, these additional payments for higher-quality care (referred to as "enhanced subsidy grants") are paid separately.

VERMONT: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased base rates from the 50th percentile to the 75th percentile of 2019 market rates, and increased tiered rates, as of July 2022. (The payment rates in Table 4e also reflect that the state reduced the number of tiered rate levels from six to five by eliminating the base rate level as of July 2022.) The state began paying all providers at the rate previously paid to providers with a five-star rating (the highest quality level) under the state's quality rating and improvement system, regardless of the state's actual quality rating, as of July 2023. The state then increased payment rates by 35 percent as of January 2024.

VIRGINIA: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased rates based on a cost estimation model as of October 2022. (If the rates generated by the model would have resulted in a decrease, rates were not changed.) Also note the state has implemented a new quality rating and improvement system (VQB5); all publicly-funded child care providers serving children birth to age 5 are required to participate in VQB5 as of fall 2023, and the first quality ratings will be published in fall 2024. As of September 30, 2024, the state will no longer use the tiered rates provided under the tiered reimbursement pilot reflected in Table 4e (which paid providers at levels four and five of the previous quality rating and improvement system bonuses of 7 percent above the base rate).

WASHINGTON: The payment rates in Tables 4c, 4d, and 4e reflect that the state increased rates by 16 percent as of July 2022; the state increased payment rates for license-exempt care and provided a rate enhancement to family child care providers as well. Prior to July 2022, payment rates for licensed care were set so that rates for providers at level two of the state's quality rating and improvement system—which are 2 percent above base rates—were at the 85th percentile of 2018 market rates. The state increased payment rates for licensed care to the 85th percentile of 2022 market rates, and increased payment rates for license-exempt family child care providers from $3.00 per hour to $3.85 per hour, as of July 2023. Also note that providers must enroll in the state's quality rating and improvement system (which has five levels) within 30 days of receiving their first payment through the child care assistance program, and must achieve a quality rating of three or higher within 30 months of registering for the quality rating and improvement system to continue serving families receiving assistance.

WEST VIRGINIA: The state set base payment rates at least at the 75th percentile of 2021 market rates, and increased tiered rates, as of March 2021. Also note that data on the state's policies as of 2001 are not available, so data on policies as of March 2000 are used instead for Table 4b.

WISCONSIN: The state set payment rates at the 80th percentile of 2022 market rates as of January 2022. Also note that the state stopped using tiered payment rates as of December 2021.

WYOMING: The state set payment rates at the 75th percentile of 2017 market rates as of October 2021. The state increased payment rates to the 50th percentile of 2022 market rates (if not already at or above that level) as of October 2023.

TABLE 5

Eligibility for Child Care Assistance While a Parent Searches for a Job in 2022 and 2023

	LENGTH OF TIME PARENTS CAN CONTINUE TO RECEIVE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE WHEN THEY LOSE A JOB WHILE RECEIVING ASSISTANCE		LENGTH OF TIME PARENTS CAN RECEIVE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE IF SEARCHING FOR A JOB WHEN THEY APPLY FOR ASSISTANCE	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Alabama	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
Alaska*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Arizona*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Arkansas*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
California*	Until end of 24-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	24 months	12 months
Colorado*	13 weeks	13 weeks	13 weeks	13 weeks
Connecticut*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Delaware*	90 days	90 days	Not eligible	Not eligible
District of Columbia*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Florida*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Georgia*	13 weeks	13 weeks	Not eligible	Not eligible
Hawai'i*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Idaho*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Illinois*	90 days	90 days	90 days	90 days
Indiana*	16 weeks	26 weeks	53 weeks	53 weeks
Iowa*	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months
Kansas*	3 months	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
Kentucky*	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months
Louisiana*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	90 days
Maine*	12 weeks	12 weeks	Not eligible	Not eligible
Maryland*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	90 days	Not eligible	Not eligible
Massachusetts*	26 weeks	26 weeks	26 weeks	26 weeks
Michigan*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
Minnesota*	3 months	3 months	240 hours	240 hours
Mississippi*	90 days	90 days	Not eligible	Not eligible
Missouri*	90 days	90 days	Not eligible	Not eligible
Montana*	90 days	90 days	Not eligible	Not eligible
Nebraska*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Nevada*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
New Hampshire*	92 days	92 days	92 days	92 days
New Jersey*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
New Mexico*	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months
New York*	3 months	3 months	Local decision	Local decision
North Carolina	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
North Dakota*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	3 months
Ohio*	3 months	3 months	30 days	30 days
Oklahoma	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	3 months	3 months
Oregon*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Pennsylvania*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
Rhode Island*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
South Carolina*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
South Dakota*	90 days	90 days	Not eligible	Not eligible
Tennessee*	90 days past 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
Texas*	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months
Utah*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	150 hours	150 hours
Vermont*	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months
Virginia*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	12 months	12 months
Washington*	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Until end of 12-month eligibility period	Not eligible	Not eligible
West Virginia*	90 days	90 days	90 days	90 days
Wisconsin*	3 months	3 months	Not eligible	Not eligible
Wyoming*	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months

NOTES FOR TABLE 5:
ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE WHILE PARENTS SEARCH FOR A JOB

The table reflects policies that apply to families not receiving TANF; policies may differ for families receiving TANF.

Data in the table for 2023 reflect policies as of February 2023, and data in the table for 2022 reflect policies as of February 2022. Certain changes in policies since February 2023 are noted below.

ALASKA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months (beginning the month after the non-temporary job loss was reported) even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 3-month period. Also note that parents cannot qualify for child care assistance if they are searching for a job when they submit their application for assistance, but they can receive child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months if they experience a job loss after they submit the application, provided they meet all other eligibility criteria.

ARIZONA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 full calendar months even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 3-month period. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF or Grant Diversion (one-time lump-sum payment) benefits and participating in the Jobs Program.

ARKANSAS: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 3-month period. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are experiencing homelessness or transitioning out of foster care.

CALIFORNIA: Parents can initially qualify or recertify for child care assistance while searching for a job for no more than 5 days per week and less than 30 hours per week.

COLORADO: Counties must allow parents to continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 13 weeks (and may allow a longer period of time) after each instance of the loss of a job or other activity. Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 13 weeks even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 13-week period, but they must provide the required verification (as well as complete the remaining redetermination requirements) at the end of their eligibility period for assistance to continue. Counties must allow parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for a minimum of 13 weeks (and may allow a longer period of time); any day in a week that a parent uses child care assistance while searching for a job is considered one week used towards the time limit.

CONNECTICUT: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Under a temporary policy in effect from March 2020 to July 2022, parents who lost a job due to COVID could continue receiving child care assistance through the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF and participating in an approved Jobs First Employment Services activity. Under a temporary policy in effect from March 2020 to July 2022, parents could also qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they lost their job due to COVID; these families could receive assistance for half-time child care for 12 months.

DELAWARE: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 90 days even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 90-day period. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are participating in TANF or the SNAP Employment and Training program or are homeless.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months after a temporary change in situation, and another 3 months after a non-temporary change in situation. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if it is a structured job search through an approved agency.

FLORIDA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 3-month period. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are applying for or receiving TANF.

GEORGIA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 13 consecutive weeks or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. From March 2020 to June 2022, parents who lost a job due to circumstances related to COVID could continue receiving child care assistance through end of the family's eligibility period and into the next eligibility period, with the activity requirement waived, as long as all other eligibility requirements were met. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are experiencing homelessness, domestic violence, or a natural disaster.

HAWAI'I: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first.

IDAHO: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF.

ILLINOIS: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job until the last day of the calendar month after the 90th day following a job loss. Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for that full time period for job search even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that time period. Parents can qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 90 days under a temporary policy that went into effect as of October 2021 and that was originally scheduled to remain in effect through June 2022, but has been extended through June 2024. (Under the state's standard policy, parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF and searching for a job is approved as part of their TANF Responsibility and Service plan.)

INDIANA: Parents receiving child care assistance are allowed a time-limited absence to care for a family member, to recover from illness, when not working between regular industry work seasons, for holidays or breaks in employment or education, due to a reduction in work or education hours, or due to any other cessation of work or an education program for a period not to exceed 16 weeks, beginning one day after their loss of employment. (Between March 2020 and May 2022, the state temporarily allowed families to continue receiving child care assistance following the loss of employment for up to 26 weeks.) Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 16 weeks even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 16-week period.

IOWA: Parents who reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of the 3-month period allowed to search for a job can reapply to continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months.

KANSAS: Under emergency provisions in effect during the pandemic until October 2022, parents could continue receiving child care assistance, regardless of job status, until a review was completed at the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, unless the family requested closure of their case or no longer met other eligibility criteria. Starting in October 2022, parents newly applying for child care assistance or undergoing their annual eligibility review are subject to the policy in the state's policy manual—which allows parents to continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for a maximum of 3 months. Also note that parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF or SNAP benefits and searching for a job is part of their work program plan, or if they are receiving social service child care or participating in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program and it is part of their social service plan.

KENTUCKY: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 calendar months or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Parents are eligible for multiple job search periods during their eligibility period for child care assistance (as long as the job search periods are not consecutive).

LOUISIANA: The state stopped allowing families to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job as of October 2022.

MAINE: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 12 weeks even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 12-week period.

MARYLAND: In 2022, parents could continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 90 days or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever came first. As of January 2023, parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job until the end of their eligibility period. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are applying for or receiving TANF and participating in an approved TANF activity.

MASSACHUSETTS: The state temporarily extended the amount of time parents could receive child care assistance while searching for a job, from 12 weeks to 26 weeks, in response to the pandemic; this temporary extension is in effect from July 2020 to July 2024. Parents could continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 26 weeks or until the end of their eligibility period, whichever came first. Parents that did not have a job at the end of their eligibility period could qualify for 26 weeks of child care assistance at their reauthorization. Parents are eligible for multiple job search periods during their eligibility period for child care assistance (as long as the job search periods are not consecutive).

MICHIGAN: Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF and searching for a job is included in the parent's self-sufficiency plan for the work participation program.

MINNESOTA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 calendar months or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Parents can qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 240 hours per calendar year, for no more than 20 hours per week (unless the parent is receiving TANF, in which case the parent can receive child care assistance while searching for a job for the amount of time identified in the parent's employment plan).

MISSISSIPPI: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 90 days even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 90-day period. Parents receiving child care assistance must notify the state agency within 10 days of the job loss. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF.

MISSOURI: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job until the last day of the month in which the 90th day allowed for job search falls. Parents can continue receiving child care assistance until the end of this time period even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of the time limit for job search. Parents could qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 60 days if the job loss was due to COVID under a temporary policy that was in effect through September 2022. In February 2023, parents could only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they were receiving TANF or experiencing homelessness. As of March 31, 2023, the state began allowing all parents meeting other eligibility criteria (not just those receiving TANF or experiencing homelessness) to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 90 days or until the last day of the month in which the 90th day allowed for job search falls.

MONTANA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 90 days or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are experiencing homelessness.

NEBRASKA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 consecutive calendar months following each instance of the loss of employment, and the child care assistance can cover the same number of hours of child care as prior to their job loss. Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 3-month period. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are participating in a workforce program such as SNAP Employment and Training or Unemployment Compensation.

NEVADA: Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF, homeless, or participating in wrap-around services.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 92 days even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 92-day period (although they must complete the redetermination process at the end of the eligibility period). Parents must verify their job search with either receipt of unemployment compensation, a registration page from the New Hampshire Job Match System, or participation in the New Hampshire Employment Program.

NEW JERSEY: Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF or experiencing homelessness.

NEW MEXICO: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance following a temporary change of activity, including the cessation of work or attendance at a training or education program, for up to 3 months. Parents can also continue receiving assistance when they experience a non-temporary change of activity, including the loss of employment, during a 3-month grace period. A parent can continue receiving child care assistance for 3 months following a job loss plus an additional 3 months to look for work during the grace period, for a total of 6 months.

NEW YORK: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Prior to October 2023, local districts could choose whether to allow parents to qualify to receive child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 6 months if the district had funds available. As of October 2023, local districts must allow parents to qualify to receive child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 6 months if the district has funds available.

NORTH DAKOTA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 consecutive months or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. From March 2021 until October 2022, the state had a temporary policy in effect allowing parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months. When that temporary policy expired, the state returned to its previous policy of only allowing parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they were receiving or transitioning from TANF or experiencing homelessness. As of February 2024, the state began allowing all parents meeting other eligibility criteria (not just those receiving or transitioning from TANF or experiencing homelessness) to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.

OHIO: Counties have to allow parents to continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for at least 3 months but not more than 4 months. Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job up to the time limit or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Parents applying for child care assistance can receive assistance while searching for a job for up to 30 days during which their application is processed. Parents experiencing homelessness can qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for a full 12-month eligibility period, and parents receiving TANF can qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job as long as job search is their approved activity.

OREGON: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 3-month period. Parents can continue receiving assistance for longer than 3 months after the loss of a job if they provide verification from an employer of the date they expect to return to work. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are enrolled in school or, under a policy change that went into effect as of July 2023, receiving TANF.

PENNSYLVANIA: Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF or experiencing homelessness. Families experiencing homelessness can qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 92 days. Parents already receiving child care assistance can be granted presumptive eligibility, for 92 days, at their redetermination if they are homeless or if they are not working because they are on approved leave (disability, maternity, or a temporary break) and have a verified job to go back to within 92 days.

RHODE ISLAND: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, unless the parent loses a job near the end of the eligibility period, in which case the family can continue receiving child care assistance for a 3-month period that would extend beyond the end of the eligibility period. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are entering an approved education or training program or receiving TANF.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are experiencing homelessness, are dual language learners, are receiving assistance through TANF-related funding sources, or have children enrolled in Head Start.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 90 days or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first.

TENNESSEE: Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF or participating in the SNAP Employment and Training program. Also note that, as of June 2022, parents who do not meet the work activity requirement at recertification can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for an additional 90 days.

TEXAS: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Under a temporary waiver that went into effect as of July 2021, parents could qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months; this policy was made permanent as of October 2022. Prior to July 2021, parents could only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they were experiencing homelessness.

UTAH: Under the state's separate Kids-In-Care Program, parents can qualify or continue to receive child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 150 hours in a 6-month period.

VERMONT: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 3-month period.

VIRGINIA: Under a temporary policy change that went into effect as of March 2021, parents could qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 12 months; this policy was made permanent as of October 2022. Prior to March 2021, parents could only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they were participating in the TANF work program.

WASHINGTON: Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are receiving TANF and job search is an approved activity or if they are experiencing homelessness.

WEST VIRGINIA: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 90 days (for up to 9 hours per day, 5 days per week) even if they reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of that 90-day period.

WISCONSIN: Parents can continue receiving child care assistance while searching for a job for up to 3 months following the month of the job loss or until the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance, whichever comes first. Parents can only qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job if they are participating in TANF, Tribal TANF, or the FoodShare Employment and Training program.

WYOMING: If parents reach the end of their eligibility period for child care assistance before the end of their 3-month period for job search, they can reapply for child care assistance and receive up to 3 months of child care assistance while searching for a job. Parent who initially qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job can receive assistance for up to 3 months, for up to 20 hours per week.

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