COLORADO STATE CHILD CARE FACT SHEET

State Child Care Assistance Policies: Colorado

December 2013

• **Income eligibility limit:** In 2013, counties in Colorado could set the income limit for a family of three to qualify for child care assistance between $24,814 per year (127 percent of poverty, 36 percent of state median income) and $58,176 per year (298 percent of poverty, 85 percent of state median income).¹

• **Waiting list:** Colorado had 75 children on county waiting lists for child care assistance as of February 2013.²

• **Parent copayments:** In 2013, a family of three with an income at 100 percent of poverty ($19,530 a year) receiving child care assistance in Colorado paid $163 per month, or 10 percent of its income, in copayments. A family of three with an income at 150 percent of poverty ($29,295 a year) receiving child care assistance paid $269 per month, or 11 percent of its income, in copayments.

• **Reimbursement rates:** In 2013, Colorado's reimbursement rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance were below the federally recommended level—the 75th percentile of current market rates, which is the level designed to give families access to 75 percent of the providers in their community.³

  • The monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Denver was $591,⁴ which was $405 (41 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.

  • The monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in Denver was $737,⁵ which was $470 (39 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.

• **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2013, some counties in Colorado, including Denver, paid higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.⁶

  • The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Denver at the highest quality tier was 34 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.

  • The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in Denver at the highest quality tier was still below the 75th percentile of current market rates.

• **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2013, Colorado allowed parents to qualify for or continue receiving child care assistance for up to 30 days while searching for a job.


¹ Counties set their income limits within state guidelines. Also note that counties may allow families already receiving assistance to continue doing so after their income exceeds the county's initial income limit for up to six months, if their income remains below 85 percent of state median income. As of October 2013, the maximum level at which counties are allowed to set their income limit was expected to increase to $60,284 (85 percent of state median income) to adjust for the updated state median income estimate.

² Waiting lists are kept at the county level, rather than at the state level. This waiting list total is the total of reported county waiting lists.

³ Each county determines its own reimbursement rates.

⁴ Denver has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.

⁵ This is the base (lowest) rate, which is the most common rate level.

⁶ Each county determines whether to offer higher rates for higher-quality care.