State Child Care Assistance Policies: Kentucky
December 2013

- **Income eligibility limit:** As of February 2013, a family of three in Kentucky could qualify for child care assistance with an annual income up to $27,804 (142 percent of poverty, 52 percent of state median income).\(^1\)

- **Waiting list:** Kentucky had frozen intake—turned away families without adding their names to a waiting list—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 Kentucky paid $130 per month, or 8 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 $260 per month, or 11 percent of its income, in copayments.

- **Reimbursement rates:** In 2013, Kentucky'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.

  - Kentucky's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in the Central Region was $466,\(^3\) which was $119 (20 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.

  - Kentucky's monthly reimbursement rate for center care for a one-year-old in the Central Region was $532,\(^4\) which was $118 (18 percent) below the 75th percentile of current market rates for this type of care.

- **Tiered reimbursement rates:** In 2013, Kentucky paid higher reimbursement rates for higher-quality care.

  - The reimbursement rate for center care for a four-year-old in the Central Region at the highest quality tier was 13 percent higher than the rate at the lowest quality tier.\(^5\)

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

- **Eligibility for parents searching for a job:** In 2013, Kentucky allowed parents to continue receiving child care assistance for up to 4 weeks while searching for a job. However, the state did not allow parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.

1 In February 2013, families already receiving assistance could continue doing so until their income reached $30,588. As of July 2013, the income limit was reduced to $18,530 (100 percent of the 2011 federal poverty level); there is also no longer a separate exit eligibility limit.

2 The state froze intake in early 2013 for families with incomes at or above 100 percent of poverty. Children receiving child protective or preventive services, children whose parents were required to participate in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Kentucky Works Program, children with special needs, and teen parents were served and not subject to the freeze.

3 The state has higher rates for higher-quality care; this is the most common rate level (the level representing the greatest number of providers).

4 This is the most common rate level.

5 The state has four star levels. The amount of the bonus at each star level—for four-year-olds, $7 to $11 per month for two-star providers, $11 to $15 per month for three-star providers, and $14 to $18 per month for four-star providers—depends on the percentage of children served by the provider who are receiving child care assistance. For all levels, a licensed or certified provider may receive, to the extent funds are available, $2 per day beyond the maximum rate if the provider is accredited. The calculation of the highest rate assumes that the provider receives the maximum allowable bonus at the four-star level and is accredited.