



Oklahoma Child Care  
RESOURCE & REFERRAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

**FOR RELEASE**

**NEW REPORT: Child Care Assistance State by State**

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Despite families in twenty-four states being worse off when it comes to child care assistance, Oklahoma has managed to remain unchanged according to a report released today by the National Women's Law Center. The report, *Pivot Point: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2013*, is a new state-by-state report comparing policies over the last year. Child care in Oklahoma is vital to families, employers and the economy. It gives children the opportunity to learn and develop skills they need to succeed in school and in life. It gives parents the support and peace of mind they need to be productive at work. And, by strengthening the current and future workforce, it helps our state and nation's economy. Yet many families, particularly low-income families, struggle to afford child care. The average fee for full-time care in Oklahoma ranges from approximately \$4,700 to \$6,240 per year and can exceed \$10,000, depending on where the family lives, the type of care, and the age of the child. Child care assistance can help families with these high child care costs.

Even though the importance of child care assistance, families in twenty-four states were worse off—having more limited access to assistance and/or receiving more limited benefits from assistance—in February 2013 than in February 2012 under one or more child care assistance policies covered in this report. But families in twenty-seven states were better off under one or more of these policies in February 2013 than in February 2012. The policies covered are critical in determining families' ability to obtain child care assistance and the extent of help that assistance offers—income eligibility limits to qualify for child care assistance, waiting lists for child care assistance, copayments required of parents receiving child care assistance, reimbursement rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance, and eligibility for child care assistance for parents searching for a job.

This year's trend—with the situation for families improved in slightly more states than in which it worsened—was more positive than in the previous two years, when the situation worsened for families in more states than it improved.

Below is how the policies have impacted child care assistance for families in Oklahoma from 2012 to 2013:

- The income limit to receive child care assistance has remained the same, \$35,100 for a family of three with two children care.
- Oklahoma does not currently have and has never had a waiting list for families to receive child care assistance.
- Monthly co-payments for a family of three with two in care has remained the same at 150% of poverty and 100% of poverty; \$189 and \$132, respectively.
- Child care providers are reimbursed at 23<sup>rd</sup> – 72<sup>nd</sup> percentile of 2010 rates depending on the type of care, age of the child, geographic region and quality rating of the provider. Reimbursement for a one year old in an enhanced county in Oklahoma is \$601, 17% less than the market rate at 75<sup>th</sup> percentile (\$723).
- The policy has remained the same; parents can continue to receive child care assistance for up to 30 calendar days while searching for a job if they have been receiving child care assistance for at least 30 days prior to losing a job or completing an education program. Parents may be approved to receive child care assistance while searching for a job no more than twice per calendar years, and must have been employed or going to school for at least 90 calendar days between approval periods.

While child care assistance policies have remained the same over the last year with no positive or negative impact to Oklahoma families, comparing policies from 2001 to 2013, our families are worse off today.

**ABOUT THE OKLAHOMA CHILD CARE RESOURCE & REFERRAL ASSOCIATION:**  
The Oklahoma Child Care Resource & Referral Association, Inc., is a private, not-for-profit organization that coordinates the statewide network of community-based child care resource and referral agencies. The Association serves families in their search for appropriate care; assists child care providers in their efforts to establish and operate licensed facilities with qualified staff; and advises employers about cost-efficient ways to help employees with their child care needs.

Founded in 1999, the Association receives funding from the Department of Human Services, Oklahoma Child Care Services. For more information, call 888-962-2772 or visit the website at [www.oklahomachildcare.org](http://www.oklahomachildcare.org).