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Public Hearing New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council

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Menands, New York

Presented by:
Susan Antos, Senior Attorney

Prepared by:
Susan Antos, Senior Attorney,
Saima A. Akhtar, Senior Attorney

III. Prioritize Distribution of Scarce Child Care Dollars to Working Families: Exempt Parents of Very Young Children from the Welfare Work Rules when there is not Enough Funding to Serve All Eligible

Without assistance in paying for child care, low wage workers cannot make ends meet. Research shows that without assistance, most families below 200% of poverty cannot pay for both child care and rent.⁹ The report on the Self-Sufficiency Standard for New York concludes that in order meet basic needs, including child care, a family of three with a preschooler and a school age child needs the following hourly wage:¹⁰

- NYC (Northern Manhattan): \$27.38 per hour
- Westchester/Yonkers: \$32.38 per hour
- Erie: \$22.33 per hour
- Suffolk: \$37.37 per hour

These hourly wages are significantly above the wages earned by many families and illustrate how, without a subsidy, the cost of child care is out of reach to low wage families, and that without assistance, they face the bleak choice between paying the rent and paying for child care.

With limited funds, we need to carefully and planfully assess how we allocate our child care dollars. The system is strained because the public cost of a subsidized child care slot, which has increased to \$7,574 per year, is entirely paid with public funds when the recipient of a subsidy is on public assistance.¹¹ Public assistance recipients are required to participate in work programs as a condition of receiving assistance and are guaranteed child care subsidies to make it possible for the parent to work. Currently, under state statute and regulation, public assistance recipients are exempt from the work activities requirement only until their children are 3 months old.¹² After that, they are required to participate in work activities while their child attends fully-subsidized child care. Although there is evidence that work activities such as job search and work experience programs result in little or no economic gain for these families,¹³ New York State prioritizes spending its limited child care dollars to support these activities when there is not enough funding to support low income working families with real jobs.

Working families with incomes over the poverty level, on the other hand, contribute to the cost of their subsidized child care by making copayments. For a low income working family, the state pays only part of the cost of child care, not the whole cost of care as they would for a family receiving public assistance. Specifically, a working family is expected to pay a percentage of the

⁹ Research done in 2010 developed a self-sufficiency wage for every county and 72 family types in New York State. See: <http://www.fiscalpolicy.org/SelfSufficiencyStandardForNewYorkState2010.pdf> Even under this dated standard, our eligibility levels fail to support working families that are below these wage levels set forth in this document.

¹⁰ D. Pearce, The Self Sufficiency Standard for New York State 2010, <http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/docs/New%20York%20State%202010.pdf>

¹¹ Average cost of subsidized care per child provided by OCFs. E-mail from Janice Molnar, Office of Children and Family Services to Susan Antos, dated 12/13/16 (on file with the author).

¹² N.Y. SOC. SERV. LAW § 410-w(3); 18 NYCRR § 385.2(b)(7).

¹³ D.Greenberg, V Deitch & G. Hamilton, *Welfare toWork Program:Benefits and Costs: A Synthesis of Research*, pp. ES-4, ES-11 (MDRC, February, 2009). Available at: http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full_611.pdf (last accessed May 2, 2014).

income they earn over the poverty level toward child care. The county then pays the difference between the family share and the actual cost of care, up to the market rate established by OCFS.

Clearly we want to support public assistance parents who want to work or participate in work activities, even those with young children. However, child care for infants is the most expensive, and the first year of life is critical for parent infant bonding. For each parent on public assistance who chooses an exemption so that they can remain at home and care for their young child, 2-3 slots for working families are created.¹⁴ The details of that calculation are explained below.

Cost Analysis: Each Infant Slot from an Exempted Public Assistance Parent Creates Three Slots for Working Families

As indicated in the table below, the funding that fully supports one infant slot for a working public assistance recipient with subsidized child care would actually fund three slots for working families, because the cost is shared between the government and low income families.¹⁵ For example, in Erie County, infant care costs the county \$9,620 per year for a public assistance recipient, but a child care subsidy for a working family with a preschool age child will cost the county only \$3,739. This means that the amount of money saved by Erie County from one public assistance family that does *not* require full-time infant care can be allocated to pay for child care subsidies for 2.6 working families in need of preschool aged care, or 2.3 working families in need of infant care. In Yates County and a multitude of other smaller and predominately rural counties, the savings from one less public assistance household in need of infant care would fund 3.2 child care subsidies for working families of preschool aged children.¹⁶

Our current estimates are that this cost neutral action will make a total of \$5.38 million in child care dollars, currently being used to support child care assistance for welfare recipients, available to provide child care subsidies to parents who are employed.

¹⁴ Last year the New York State Assembly passed A.1805 (Titus)/ S.5176(Avella), which would have prioritized the use of child care funds to eligible parents who were employed by allowing unemployed parents on public assistance to choose a one year work exemption in social services districts where there was not enough funding to serve all eligible working families. Assemblymember Titus has reintroduced this bill this session (A.4662) Specifically, the bill provides that when a social services district does not have sufficient funding to serve all eligible working families under 200% of poverty, the district must offer a twelve month work exemption to welfare recipients who are personally providing care for a child less than one year of age.

¹⁵ These calculations are conservative because the average cost of a subsidy includes the costs for a fully subsidized slot of a family on public assistance and the cost of a slot of a working family that has a copayment.

¹⁶ In the accompanying chart, the estimate of child care slots for working families that can be leveraged from a public assistance infant care slot was calculated by dividing the cost of one full-time infant care slot, fully paid for by the county, by the county's share of child care costs for a working family with a child in a full-time preschool or infant care program. The market rates are separated into five distinct geographical groups and a representative county was highlighted in each of these geographical groups. The calculation was run separately for each of the five different market rate groups at two different levels—to see how many working family infant care slots can be funded from one public assistance infant slot, and how many working family preschool slots can be funded from one public assistance infant slot because the cost of care is different between different age groups. Infant care is the most expensive level of care, and preschool aged care is the most commonly used category of care. Because the number we used as the cost per slot is actually the average cost spent on public assistance and non-public assistance families, it is actually likely that each public assistance infant slot will purchase more slots than are indicated in our conservative calculations.

In addition, we estimate an additional \$3.96 million in administrative savings through the elimination of the connected work program expenses (e.g. expense of the workfare or soft skills program). **Total funds freed up would be \$9.34 million.** A detailed chart explaining this cost savings appears below.

Comparison of County Contribution to Child Care Costs for PA and Working Families: High Family Share Counties¹⁷					
County	Westchester ¹⁸	Erie ¹⁹	Yates ²⁰	Orange ²¹	NYC ²²
Annual cost: fulltime infant care	\$15,340	\$9,620	\$7,800	\$11,700	\$10,400
Annual cost: fulltime preschool aged care	\$14,300	\$9,100	\$7,800	\$10,400	\$9,100
For each infant of a PA family, the county pays the full cost of care.	\$15,340	\$9,620	\$7,800	\$11,700	\$10,400
Working families contribute to their child care costs by paying a % of their income above the poverty level.	27%	35%	35%	35%	35%
Annually, a working family contributes to the cost of care:	\$4,135.05	\$5,360.25	\$5,360.25	\$5,360.25	\$5,360.25
For each infant of a working family, the county pays	\$11,204.95	\$4,259.75	\$2,439.75	\$6,339.75	\$5,039.75
1 PA infant slot provides infant care to working families	1.37	2.26	3.20	1.85	2.06
For each preschool child of a working family, the county pays	\$10,164.95	\$3,739.75	\$2,439.75	\$5,039.75	\$3,739.75
1 PA infant slot provides fulltime preschool slots to working families	1.51	2.57	3.20	2.32	2.78

¹⁷ Calculation conducted using market rates effective June 1, 2016, and copay percentages as of February 1, 2017. Family share and county share calculations are based on a household of three earning \$35,735.00 (175% of the 2016 state income standard/federal poverty level in effect as of June 1, 2016). The type of child care assumed for this calculation were the weekly rate for a registered family day care in two different age categories: infant (0-1.5 years), and preschool (3-5 years).

¹⁸ Westchester County lies in market rate group 1, with other downstate sub-urban counties. Group 1 includes Nassau, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk and Westchester Counties.

¹⁹ Erie County lies in market rate group 2, with other upstate urban and more expensive rural counties. Group 2 includes Columbia, Erie, Monroe, Onondaga, Ontario, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Tompkins and Warren Counties.

²⁰ Yates County lies in market rate group 3, with other upstate rural and small counties. Group 3 includes a total of 38 counties: Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Cortland, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Montgomery, Niagara, Oneida, Orleans, Oswego, Otsego, Schoharie, Schuyler, Seneca, St. Lawrence, Steuben, Sullivan, Tioga, Washington, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates.

²¹ Orange County lies in market rate group 4, with other upstate high cost counties. Group 4 is made up of Albany, Dutchess, Orange, Saratoga, and Ulster Counties.

²² Market Rate Group 5 is solely comprised of the five boroughs of New York City.

Because working families have copayments and welfare recipients do not, each child care slot transferred from a welfare recipient will generate 2.4 slots for working parents on average. In addition, by reducing the amount of administrative time spent coordinating job search and workfare activities, local districts would see savings in administrative costs statewide.

We urge the ECAC to consider and review our analysis, and consider supporting legislation that would create a one year work exemption for public assistance recipients with infants in any county that cannot serve all eligible working families. This would shift child care dollars that are being spent on welfare recipients in programs like job search and workfare to low income working families with real jobs.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify today. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

For more information:

Susan Antos, Senior Attorney

518-935-2845

santos@empirejustice.org

February 28, 2017

Child Care Copayments as a Percentage of Household Income 2016-7
 [Effective 6/11/16-5/30/17 (16 OCFS INF-011)]

Family size = 1*												
Eligibility	FPL (100%)	125%	140%	150%	167%	175%	200%	225%	250%	275%		
Annual Income	\$11,880.00	\$14,850.00	\$16,632.00	\$17,820.00	\$19,839.60	\$20,790.00	\$23,760.00	\$26,730.00	\$29,700.00	\$32,670.00		
Multiplier	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income
10.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$297.00	2.0%	\$475.20	2.9%	\$594.00	3.3%	\$795.96	4.0%	\$891.00	4.3%
15.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$445.50	3.0%	\$712.80	4.3%	\$891.00	5.0%	\$1,193.94	6.0%	\$1,336.50	6.4%
20.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$594.00	4.0%	\$950.40	5.7%	\$1,188.00	6.7%	\$1,591.92	8.0%	\$1,782.00	8.6%
25.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$742.50	5.0%	\$1,188.00	7.1%	\$1,485.00	8.3%	\$1,989.90	10.0%	\$2,227.50	10.7%
27.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$801.90	5.4%	\$1,283.04	7.7%	\$1,603.80	9.0%	\$2,149.09	10.8%	\$2,405.70	11.6%
30.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$891.00	6.0%	\$1,425.60	8.6%	\$1,782.00	10.0%	\$2,387.88	12.0%	\$2,673.00	12.9%
35.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,039.50	7.0%	\$1,663.20	10.0%	\$2,079.00	11.7%	\$2,785.86	14.0%	\$3,118.50	15.0%
*Child only families are those where the care giver is not financially responsible for the child, such as if a child lives with a grandparent who has custody or guardianship but has not adopted the child.												
Family size = 2												
Eligibility	FPL (100%)	125%	140%	150%	167%	175%	200%	225%	250%	275%		
Annual Income	\$16,020.00	\$20,025.00	\$22,428.00	\$24,030.00	\$26,753.40	\$28,035.00	\$32,040.00	\$36,045.00	\$40,050.00	\$44,055.00		
Multiplier	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income
10.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$400.50	2.0%	\$640.80	2.9%	\$801.00	3.3%	\$1,073.34	4.0%	\$1,201.50	4.3%
15.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$600.75	3.0%	\$961.20	4.3%	\$1,201.50	5.0%	\$1,610.01	6.0%	\$1,802.25	6.4%
20.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$801.00	4.0%	\$1,281.60	5.7%	\$1,602.00	6.7%	\$2,146.68	8.0%	\$2,403.00	8.6%
25.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,001.25	5.0%	\$1,602.00	7.1%	\$2,002.50	8.3%	\$2,683.35	10.0%	\$3,003.75	10.7%
27.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,081.35	5.4%	\$1,730.16	7.7%	\$2,162.70	9.0%	\$2,898.02	10.8%	\$3,244.05	11.6%
30.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,201.50	6.0%	\$1,922.40	8.6%	\$2,403.00	10.0%	\$3,220.02	12.0%	\$3,604.50	12.9%
35.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,401.75	7.0%	\$2,242.80	10.0%	\$2,803.50	11.7%	\$3,756.69	14.0%	\$4,205.25	15.0%

Child Care Copayments as a Percentage of Household Income 2016-7
 [effective 6/1/16-5/30/17 (16 OCFS INF-01)]

Family size = 3																					
Eligibility % Annual Income	FPL (100%)		125%		140%		150%		167%		175%		200%		225%		250%		275%		
	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	
10.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$504.00	2.0%	\$806.40	2.9%	\$1,008.00	3.3%	\$1,350.72	4.0%	\$1,512.00	4.3%	\$2,016.00	5.0%	\$2,520.00	5.6%	\$3,024.00	6.0%	\$3,528.00	6.4%	
15.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$756.00	3.0%	\$1,209.60	4.3%	\$1,512.00	5.0%	\$2,026.08	6.0%	\$2,268.00	6.4%	\$3,024.00	7.5%	\$4,536.00	8.3%	\$4,536.00	9.0%	\$5,292.00	9.5%	
20.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,008.00	4.0%	\$1,612.80	5.7%	\$2,016.00	6.7%	\$2,701.44	8.0%	\$3,024.00	8.6%	\$4,032.00	10.0%	\$5,040.00	11.1%	\$6,048.00	12.0%	\$7,056.00	12.7%	
25.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,260.00	5.0%	\$2,016.00	7.1%	\$2,520.00	8.3%	\$3,376.80	10.0%	\$3,646.94	10.7%	\$5,040.00	12.5%	\$6,300.00	13.9%	\$7,560.00	15.0%	\$8,820.00	15.9%	
27.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,360.80	5.4%	\$2,177.28	7.7%	\$2,721.60	9.0%	\$3,646.94	10.8%	\$4,082.40	11.6%	\$5,443.20	13.5%	\$6,804.00	15.0%	\$8,164.80	16.2%	\$9,525.60	17.2%	
30.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,512.00	6.0%	\$2,419.20	8.6%	\$3,024.00	10.0%	\$4,052.16	12.0%	\$4,536.00	12.9%	\$6,048.00	15.0%	\$7,560.00	16.7%	\$9,072.00	18.0%	\$10,584.00	19.1%	
35.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,764.00	7.0%	\$2,822.40	10.0%	\$3,528.00	11.7%	\$4,727.52	14.0%	\$5,292.00	15.0%	\$7,056.00	17.5%	\$8,820.00	19.4%	\$10,584.00	21.0%	\$12,348.00	22.3%	
Family size = 4																					
Eligibility % Annual Income	FPL (100%)		125%		140%		150%		167%		175%		200%		225%		250%		275%		
	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	Yearly Copay	% of Income	
10.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$607.50	2.0%	\$972.00	2.9%	\$1,215.00	3.3%	\$1,628.10	4.0%	\$1,822.50	4.3%	\$2,430.00	5.0%	\$3,037.50	5.6%	\$3,645.00	6.0%	\$4,252.50	6.4%	
15.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$911.25	3.0%	\$1,458.00	4.3%	\$1,822.50	5.0%	\$2,442.15	6.0%	\$2,733.75	6.4%	\$3,645.00	7.5%	\$4,556.25	8.3%	\$4,556.25	9.0%	\$5,467.50	9.5%	
20.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,215.00	4.0%	\$1,944.00	5.7%	\$2,430.00	6.7%	\$3,256.20	8.0%	\$3,645.00	8.6%	\$4,860.00	10.0%	\$6,075.00	11.1%	\$7,290.00	12.0%	\$8,505.00	12.7%	
25.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,518.75	5.0%	\$2,430.00	7.1%	\$3,037.50	8.3%	\$4,070.25	10.0%	\$4,556.25	10.7%	\$6,075.00	12.5%	\$7,593.75	13.9%	\$9,112.50	15.0%	\$10,631.25	15.9%	
27.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,640.25	5.4%	\$2,624.40	7.7%	\$3,280.50	9.0%	\$4,395.87	10.8%	\$4,920.75	11.6%	\$6,561.00	13.5%	\$8,201.25	15.0%	\$9,841.50	16.2%	\$11,481.75	17.2%	
30.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$1,822.50	6.0%	\$2,916.00	8.6%	\$3,645.00	10.0%	\$4,884.30	12.0%	\$5,467.50	12.9%	\$7,290.00	15.0%	\$9,112.50	16.7%	\$10,935.00	18.0%	\$12,757.50	19.1%	
35.0%	\$0.00	0.0%	\$2,126.25	7.0%	\$3,402.00	10.0%	\$4,252.50	11.7%	\$5,698.35	14.0%	\$6,378.75	15.0%	\$8,505.00	17.5%	\$10,631.25	19.4%	\$12,757.50	21.0%	\$14,883.75	22.3%	

Child Care Copayments as a Percentage of Household Income 2016-7
 [effective 6/1/16-5/30/17 (16 OCFS INF-01)]

Family size = 7		125%		140%		150%		167%		175%		200%		225%		250%		275%	
Eligibility %	FPL (100%)	Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay	
Annual Income	\$36,730.00	\$45,912.50	\$51,422.00	\$55,095.00	\$61,339.10	\$64,277.50	\$73,460.00	\$82,642.50	\$91,825.00	\$101,007.50	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income
Multiplier	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%	25.0%	30.0%	35.0%	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%	25.0%	30.0%	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%	25.0%	30.0%	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%
10.0%	\$0.00	\$918.25	\$1,469.20	\$1,836.50	\$2,460.91	\$2,754.75	\$3,673.00	\$4,591.25	\$5,509.50	\$6,427.75	4.3%	5.6%	6.0%	7.5%	8.3%	9.0%	6.0%	7.5%	8.3%
15.0%	\$0.00	\$1,377.38	\$2,203.80	\$2,754.75	\$3,691.37	\$4,132.13	\$5,509.50	\$6,886.88	\$8,264.25	\$9,641.63	6.4%	8.3%	8.3%	10.0%	11.1%	12.0%	9.0%	10.0%	10.0%
20.0%	\$0.00	\$1,836.50	\$2,938.40	\$3,673.00	\$4,921.82	\$5,509.50	\$7,346.00	\$9,182.50	\$11,019.00	\$12,855.50	8.0%	10.0%	10.0%	12.5%	13.9%	15.0%	12.0%	13.9%	13.9%
25.0%	\$0.00	\$2,295.63	\$3,673.00	\$4,591.25	\$6,152.28	\$6,886.88	\$9,182.50	\$11,478.13	\$13,773.75	\$16,069.38	10.7%	12.5%	12.5%	15.0%	16.2%	17.2%	15.0%	16.2%	16.2%
27.0%	\$0.00	\$2,479.28	\$3,966.84	\$4,958.55	\$6,644.46	\$7,437.83	\$9,917.10	\$12,396.38	\$14,875.65	\$17,354.93	11.6%	13.5%	13.5%	16.2%	17.2%	18.0%	16.2%	17.2%	17.2%
30.0%	\$0.00	\$2,754.75	\$4,407.60	\$5,509.50	\$7,382.73	\$8,264.25	\$11,019.00	\$13,773.75	\$16,528.50	\$19,283.25	12.9%	15.0%	15.0%	18.0%	19.4%	21.0%	18.0%	19.4%	19.4%
35.0%	\$0.00	\$3,213.88	\$5,142.20	\$6,427.75	\$8,613.19	\$9,641.63	\$12,855.50	\$16,069.38	\$19,283.25	\$22,497.13	15.0%	17.5%	17.5%	21.0%	22.3%	22.3%	21.0%	22.3%	22.3%
Family size = 8																			
Eligibility %	FPL (100%)	Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay		Yearly Copay	
Annual Income	\$40,890.00	\$51,112.50	\$57,246.00	\$61,335.00	\$68,286.30	\$71,557.50	\$81,780.00	\$92,002.50	\$102,225.00	\$112,447.50	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income	% of Income
Multiplier	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%	25.0%	30.0%	35.0%	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%	25.0%	30.0%	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%	25.0%	30.0%	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%
10.0%	\$0.00	\$1,022.25	\$1,635.60	\$2,044.50	\$2,739.63	\$3,066.75	\$4,089.00	\$5,111.25	\$6,133.50	\$7,155.75	4.3%	5.6%	5.6%	7.5%	8.3%	9.0%	6.0%	7.5%	8.3%
15.0%	\$0.00	\$1,533.38	\$2,453.40	\$3,066.75	\$4,109.45	\$4,600.13	\$6,133.50	\$7,666.88	\$9,200.25	\$10,733.63	6.4%	8.3%	8.3%	10.0%	11.1%	12.0%	9.0%	10.0%	10.0%
20.0%	\$0.00	\$2,044.50	\$3,271.20	\$4,089.00	\$5,479.26	\$6,133.50	\$8,178.00	\$10,222.50	\$12,267.00	\$14,311.50	8.6%	10.0%	10.0%	12.5%	13.9%	15.0%	12.0%	13.9%	13.9%
25.0%	\$0.00	\$2,555.63	\$4,089.00	\$5,111.25	\$6,849.08	\$7,666.88	\$10,222.50	\$12,778.13	\$15,333.75	\$17,889.38	10.7%	12.5%	12.5%	15.0%	16.2%	17.2%	15.0%	16.2%	16.2%
27.0%	\$0.00	\$2,760.08	\$4,416.12	\$5,520.15	\$7,397.00	\$8,264.25	\$11,040.30	\$13,800.38	\$16,560.45	\$19,320.53	11.6%	13.5%	13.5%	16.2%	17.2%	18.0%	16.2%	17.2%	17.2%
30.0%	\$0.00	\$3,066.75	\$4,906.80	\$6,133.50	\$8,218.89	\$9,200.25	\$12,267.00	\$15,333.75	\$18,400.50	\$21,467.25	12.9%	15.0%	15.0%	18.0%	19.4%	21.0%	18.0%	19.4%	19.4%
35.0%	\$0.00	\$3,577.88	\$5,724.60	\$7,155.75	\$9,588.71	\$10,733.63	\$14,311.50	\$17,889.38	\$21,467.25	\$25,045.13	15.0%	17.5%	17.5%	21.0%	22.3%	22.3%	21.0%	22.3%	22.3%



CHILD CARE IN CRISIS

A PERFECT STORM OF DIMINISHED FUNDING

A GROWING LOW WAGE WORK FORCE AND THE STEADILY INCREASING COST OF CHILD CARE IS STRAINING NEW YORK'S CHILD CARE PROGRAM TO THE BREAKING POINT.

As a result, more and more eligible low income working families are being squeezed out of the program. This is because many counties no longer have sufficient funding to provide child care subsidies for families who earn less than 200% of poverty (\$40,840 for a family of 3), as New York State law allows. In order to cope, social services districts are lowering eligibility and discontinuing subsidies for low income working families who would otherwise be eligible if sufficient funds were available.

The loss of child care assistance is often the straw that breaks the camel's back for them financially. Child care providers report that parents leaving their licensed, regulated and registered programs have withdrawn them from care and are placing the children with less reliable options, or leaving them home alone. Some parents are forced to reduce work hours or quit jobs altogether in order to remain home to care for their children. Moreover, due to the cuts, many child care programs are no longer able to fill their classrooms, causing child care staff to be laid off or programs to close entirely.

As a result of these reductions, thousands of families have lost their child care subsidies. Many counties, including Monroe County, have stopped enrolling new families altogether, even with lowered eligibility levels. A number of counties that have not lowered eligibility are closing cases or creating waiting lists. As of September 1, 2016 Erie County had a waiting list of 230 families.

- More than one-third of New York's 58 Social Services Districts have lowered eligibility levels to below 200%.
- **Niagara** County only serves those at or below 120% of the federal poverty level.
- **Albany, Delaware, Dutchess, Ontario and Suffolk** Counties only serve families at or below 125% of poverty.
- **Suffolk** County has a 125% of poverty threshold for new applicants, but allows current recipients can receive benefits up to 150% of poverty. Children with special needs are eligible up to 200% of poverty.
- Although **New York City** has technically retained its eligibility levels at 200% of poverty, data shows that few families over 135% of poverty are being served.
- Five social services districts have lowered eligibility to 150%: **Clinton, Fulton, Oneida, Orange and Schenectady**.
- **Cayuga, Livingston and Rensselaer** Counties have lowered eligibility to 160% of poverty.
- **Monroe** County only serves families up to 165% of poverty.
- In **Cattaraugus, Ontario, Saratoga and Schoharie** Counties, eligibility is at 175% of poverty. **Washington** County is at 185% of poverty.

NYS Child Care Subsidy Eligibility Levels by County

County	Eligibility Level	County	Eligibility Level
Albany	125%	Niagara	120%
Allegany	200%	Oneida	150%
Broome	200%	Onondaga	200%
Cattaraugus	175%	Ontario	125%
Cayuga	160%	Orange	125%
Chautauqua	200%	Orleans	200%
Chemung	200%	Oswego	200%
Chenango	200%	Otsego	200%
Clinton	200%	Putnam	200%
Columbia	200%	Rensselaer	160%
Cortland	200%	Rockland	200%
Delaware	200%	Saratoga	175%
Dutchess	125%	Schenectady	150%
Erie	200%	Schoharie	175%
Essex	125%	Schuyler	200%
Franklin	200%	Seneca	100%
Fulton	150%	St. Lawrence	200%
Genesee	200%	Steuben	200%
Greene	**	Suffolk*	125%
Hamilton	200%	Sullivan	200%
Herkimer	200%	Tioga	200%
Jefferson	200%	Tompkins	200%
Lewis	200%	Ulster	**
Livingston	160%	Warren	200%
Madison	200%	Washington	185%
Monroe	165%	Wayne	200%
Montgomery	200%	Westchester	200%
Nassau	200%	Wyoming	200%
New York City	200%	Yates	**

*Current recipients can receive benefits up to 150% of poverty, special needs children are eligible up to 200% of poverty.

** Information not available.

Counties that have dropped eligibility levels below 200% of poverty are highlighted in red.

For more information please contact Susan Antos, Senior Attorney for Empire Justice Center at 518-935-2845 or at santos@empirejustice.org.

▶▶▶ Last revised 1/31/17

