

237A.13 State child care assistance.

1. A state child care assistance program is established in the department to assist children in families who meet eligibility guidelines and are described by any of the following circumstances:
 - a. The child's parent, guardian, or custodian is participating in approved academic or vocational training.
 - b. The child's parent, guardian, or custodian is seeking employment. Eligibility for assistance while seeking employment shall be limited to thirty days during a twelve-month period.
 - c. The child's parent, guardian, or custodian is employed and the family income meets income requirements.
 - d. The child's parent, guardian, or custodian is absent for a limited period of time due to hospitalization, physical illness, or mental illness, or is present but is unable to care for the child for a limited period as verified by a physician.
 - e. The child needs protective services to prevent or alleviate child abuse or neglect.
2. Services under the program may be provided in a licensed child care center, a child development home, the home of a relative, the child's own home, a child care home, or in a facility exempt from licensing or registration.
3. The department shall set reimbursement rates as authorized by appropriations enacted for payment of the reimbursements. The department shall conduct a statewide reimbursement rate survey to compile information on each county and the survey shall be conducted at least every two years. The department shall set rates in a manner so as to provide incentives for an unregistered provider to become registered.
4. The department shall not apply waiting list requirements to any of the following persons:
 - a. Persons deemed to be eligible for benefits under the state child care assistance program in accordance with section 239B.24.
 - b. A family that is receiving state child care assistance at the time a child is born into the family. The newborn child shall be approved for services when the family reports the birth of the child.
 - c. Children who need protective services to prevent or alleviate child abuse or neglect.
 - d. A child in a family that is eligible for state child care assistance and that receives a state adoption subsidy for the child.
5. Based upon the availability of the funding appropriated for state child care assistance for a fiscal year, the department shall establish waiting lists for state child care assistance in descending order of prioritization as follows:
 - a. Families with an income at or below one hundred percent of the federal poverty level whose members are employed at least twenty-eight hours per week, and parents with a family income at or below one hundred percent of the federal poverty level who are under the age of twenty-one years and are participating in an educational program leading to a high school diploma or the equivalent.
 - b. Parents with a family income at or below one hundred percent of the federal poverty level who are under the age of twenty-one years and are participating, at a satisfactory level, in an approved training program or in an educational program.

c. Families with an income of more than one hundred percent but not more than one hundred forty percent of the federal poverty level whose members are employed at least twenty-eight hours per week.

d. Families with an income at or below one hundred seventy-five percent of the federal poverty level whose members are employed at least twenty-eight hours per week with a special needs child as a member of the family.

6. A child care facility that previously received child care wrap-around funding, meets the requirements for being a shared vision program except that a shared vision program is not operated in the county in which the facility is located, and is providing a child care wrap-around service that is included in the community empowerment area board's plan for the community empowerment area in which the facility is located shall be deemed to be qualified for child care wrap-around funding.

7. Nothing in this section shall be construed as or is intended as, or shall imply, a grant of entitlement for services to persons who are eligible for assistance due to an income level or other eligibility circumstance addressed in this section. Any state obligation to provide services pursuant to this section is limited to the extent of the funds appropriated for the purposes of state child care assistance.

2000 Acts, ch 1067, §15; 2002 Acts, ch 1142, §17, 18, 31; 2003 Acts, ch 81, §7, 8