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### **Mississippi's Child Care Payment Program Policies Support Families**

(JACKSON, Miss.) — In the National Women's Law Center's recently released annual report was analysis of policies governing child care subsidy programs in the United States. The Mississippi Department of Human Service's Child Care Payment Program was identified as one that positively impacted families over the previous year.

All 27 states on the list, including Mississippi, had policies in place that supported families and providers in accessing a stable subsidy system. In particular, the Mississippi Child Care Payment Program served more children than in the previous year, resulting in a reduction of the number of families on the waiting list for services. In addition, Mississippi increased the eligibility period for out of work parents from 30 days to 60 days to increase parents' access to child care while pursuing employment.

Currently, the Mississippi Child Care Payment Program serves 18,670 children and has added an additional 2,000 children from the waiting list. In addition, due to policy changes and work flow improvements, parents have experienced a 62 percent decrease in the amount of time it takes to process an application once received.

The National Women's Law Center compiles information from states regarding policies that impact families receiving child care subsidies to assist with the cost of child care tuition. As a group independent from the U.S. Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, the National Women's Law Center seeks to provide an unbiased comparison to determine how states are serving clients.

The assessment looks at several policy areas including:

- Income eligibility limits.
- Number of families on the waiting list.
- Parent copayment amounts.
- Provider reimbursement rates.
- Eligibility periods during job search.

The current National Women's Law Center report reflects the dedication of MDHS to supporting low-income working families through this program. To view a copy of this report, visit <http://action.nwlc.org/site/R?i=G31apnWXrioXNBuZdp77UA>.

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