

2022 -- H 7177

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LC004085
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES -- RHODE ISLAND CHILDCARE IS ESSENTIAL ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Diaz, Shallcross Smith, Caldwell, Casimiro, Biah,
Cassar, Ruggiero, Slater, Alzate, and Bennett

Date Introduced: January 26, 2022

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 40 of the General Laws entitled "HUMAN SERVICES" is hereby
2 amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 6.7

4 RHODE ISLAND CHILDCARE IS ESSENTIAL ACT

5 **40-6.7-1. Legislative findings.**

6 The general assembly finds that:

7 (1) Access to affordable, high-quality childcare is essential to support labor force
8 participation of parents with children from infancy through age twelve (12) years and to maximize
9 the economic productivity of the state.

10 (2) Access to affordable, high-quality childcare is essential for all parents to achieve
11 economic security and independence, particularly for mothers who often have lower lifetime
12 earnings because they earn lower wages, work reduced hours, and take longer breaks from work in
13 order to care for children.

14 (3) High-quality childcare programs, staffed by qualified and effective educators, are
15 essential for children to promote healthy development and optimize learning during early childhood
16 and school-age years.

17 (4) A landmark 2015 report by the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council
18 found that children begin learning at birth and the adults that provide for the care and education of
19 children bear a great responsibility for their health, development, and learning -- setting the critical

1 foundation for lifelong progress. The report recommends that states work to increase the
2 qualifications and compensation of childcare educators, including those who care for infants and
3 toddlers.

4 (5) Childcare educators are among the lowest paid workers in Rhode Island. In 2020, the
5 median wage of a childcare educator in Rhode Island was twelve dollars and eleven cents (\$12.11)
6 per hour. As the state minimum wage increases, childcare programs will need additional revenue
7 to comply with the minimum wage rules and to attract and retain qualified and effective educators.

8 (6) The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides significant funding to
9 Rhode Island through the Childcare and Development Block Grant and has established clear
10 guidelines for setting rates that provide low-income families with "equal access" to the childcare
11 market as required under federal law. The "equal access" guideline is to pay rates equal to or above
12 the seventy-fifth percentile of a recent market rate survey.

13 (7) The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has also established a clear
14 guideline for determining whether childcare is affordable. Currently, the federal guideline for
15 affordability is that families should pay no more than seven percent (7%) of family income for
16 childcare. Using that guideline, almost all families with young children in the State of Rhode Island
17 need a subsidy to afford the cost of high-quality childcare staffed by qualified, effective, and fairly-
18 compensated educators.

19 **40-6.7-2. Childcare assistance -- Families or assistance units eligible.**

20 (a) The department of human services shall provide appropriate childcare to every
21 participant who is eligible for cash assistance and who requires childcare in order to meet the work
22 requirements in accordance with this chapter.

23 (b) Low-income childcare. The department shall provide childcare to all other families with
24 incomes at or below two hundred sixty-six percent (266%) of the federal poverty level if, and to
25 the extent, these other families require childcare in order to work at paid employment and/or to
26 participate in training, apprenticeship, internship, on-the-job training, work experience, work
27 immersion, or other job-readiness/job- attachment programs sponsored or funded by the human
28 resource investment council (governor's workforce board) or state agencies that are part of the
29 coordinated program system pursuant to § 42-102-11. Effective January 1, 2023, the department
30 shall also provide childcare assistance to families with incomes below two hundred sixty-six
31 percent (266%) of the federal poverty level when such assistance is necessary for a member of
32 these families to enroll or maintain enrollment in a Rhode Island public institution of higher
33 education.

34 (c) No family/assistance unit shall be eligible for childcare assistance under this chapter if

1 the combined value of its liquid resources exceeds one million dollars (\$1,000,000), which
2 corresponds to the amount permitted by the federal government under the state plan and set forth
3 in the administrative rulemaking process by the department. Liquid resources are defined as any
4 interest(s) in property in the form of cash or other financial instruments or accounts that are readily
5 convertible to cash or cash equivalents. These resources include, but are not limited to: cash, bank,
6 credit union, or other financial institution savings, checking, and money market accounts;
7 certificates of deposit or other time deposits; stocks; bonds; mutual funds; and other similar
8 financial instruments or accounts. These resources do not include educational savings accounts,
9 plans, or programs; retirement accounts, plans, or programs; or accounts held jointly with another
10 adult, not including a spouse. The department is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to
11 determine the ownership and source of the funds in the joint account.

12 (d) For purposes of this section, "appropriate childcare" means childcare, including infant,
13 toddler, preschool, nursery school, and school age, that is provided by a person or organization
14 qualified, approved, and authorized to provide the care by the state agency or agencies designated
15 to make the determinations in accordance with the provisions set forth in this section.

16 (e)(1) Families with incomes at or below one hundred percent (100%) of the applicable
17 federal poverty level guidelines shall be provided with free childcare. Families with incomes
18 greater than one hundred percent (100%) of the applicable federal poverty guideline shall be
19 required to pay for some portion of the childcare they receive, according to a sliding-fee scale
20 adopted by the department in the department's rules, not to exceed seven percent (7%) of income.
21 Income is defined in subsection (g) of this section.

22 (2) Families who are receiving childcare shall continue to be eligible for childcare
23 assistance until their incomes exceed four hundred percent (400%) of the applicable federal poverty
24 guidelines. To be eligible, the families must continue to pay for some portion of the childcare they
25 receive, as indicated in a sliding-fee scale adopted in the department's rules, not to exceed seven
26 percent (7%) of income. Income is defined in subsection (g) of this section.

27 (f) In determining the type of childcare to be provided to a family, the department shall
28 take into account the cost of available childcare options; the suitability of the type of care available
29 for the child; and the parent's preference as to the type of childcare.

30 (g) For purposes of this section, "income" for families receiving cash assistance under §
31 40-5.2-11 means gross, earned income and unearned income, subject to the income exclusions in
32 §§ 40-5.2-10(g)(2) and 40-5.2-10(g)(3). Income for families applying for or receiving low-income
33 childcare shall mean gross earned income minus a twenty percent (20%) disregard applied to the
34 earnings of each adult family member. Earnings of a child under age eighteen (18) years shall not

1 be counted. Income shall also include unearned income subject to exclusions as determined by
2 departmental regulations.

3 (h) The caseload estimating conference established by chapter 17 of title 35 shall forecast
4 the expenditures for childcare in accordance with the provisions of § 35-17-1.

5 (i) In determining eligibility for childcare assistance for children of members of reserve
6 components called to active duty during a time of conflict, the department shall freeze the family
7 composition and the family income of the reserve component member as it was in the month prior
8 to the month of leaving for active duty. This freeze shall continue until the individual is officially
9 discharged from active duty.

10 (j) In anticipation of significant new federal resources to help more families access
11 affordable, reliable, high-quality childcare, the governor and state agencies are hereby authorized
12 to accept new federal childcare funding and use funds to expand eligibility and reduce or eliminate
13 family copayments for the childcare assistance program.

14 **40-6.7-3. Childcare assistance -- Rates established.**

15 (a) Effective July 1, 2022, the reimbursement rates to be paid by the departments of human
16 services and children, youth and families for licensed childcare centers shall be updated to reflect
17 findings from the 2021 Rhode Island childcare market rate survey and shall be implemented in a
18 tiered manner, reflective of the quality rating the provider has achieved within the state's quality
19 rating system outlined in § 42-12-23.1. All rates shall meet or exceed the federal equal access
20 benchmark (seventy-fifth percentile from the 2021 Rhode Island childcare market rate survey) and
21 programs that have achieved a high-quality rating shall be paid rates at or above the ninetieth
22 percentile of the 2021 Rhode Island childcare market rate survey. Weekly rates shall be reimbursed
23 as follows:

24 LICENSED CHILDCARE CENTERS

	<u>Tier One</u>	<u>Tier Two</u>	<u>Tier Three</u>	<u>Tier Four</u>	<u>Tier Five</u>
<u>Infant/Toddler</u>	<u>\$281</u>	<u>\$294</u>	<u>\$308</u>	<u>\$322</u>	<u>\$335</u>
<u>Preschool</u>	<u>\$250</u>	<u>\$257</u>	<u>\$265</u>	<u>\$273</u>	<u>\$280</u>
<u>School-Age</u>	<u>\$238</u>	<u>\$241</u>	<u>\$244</u>	<u>\$247</u>	<u>\$250</u>

29 LICENSED FAMILY CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

	<u>Tier One</u>	<u>Tier Two</u>	<u>Tier Three</u>	<u>Tier Four</u>	<u>Tier Five</u>
<u>Infant/Toddler</u>	<u>\$250</u>	<u>\$254</u>	<u>\$257</u>	<u>\$260</u>	<u>\$263</u>
<u>Preschool</u>	<u>\$239</u>	<u>\$241</u>	<u>\$244</u>	<u>\$247</u>	<u>\$250</u>
<u>School-Age</u>	<u>\$200</u>	<u>\$212</u>	<u>\$225</u>	<u>\$238</u>	<u>\$251</u>

34 (b) Annually, on or before July 1 of each year beginning July 1, 2022, the departments of

1 human services and children, youth and families shall ensure rates are at or above the federal equal
2 access standard for childcare and shall increase weekly childcare reimbursement rates to reflect
3 increases in program operating costs, based on the Consumer Price Index calculated by the U.S.
4 Bureau of Labor Statistics.

5 (c) As required under the 2014 federal Childcare and Development Block Grant Act, the
6 departments of human services and children, youth and families shall review and update the state's
7 childcare assistance program payment practices to match generally accepted payment practices for
8 childcare programs in the private market, such as payment of tuition before services are delivered,
9 payment based on enrollment, payment of registration and intake fees, and payment rates for part-
10 time and extended-time care options that take into account the higher hourly cost to serve children
11 on part-time schedules or extended-time schedules. New payment practices shall be established in
12 state regulation and be implemented on or before December 1, 2022.

13 (d) In anticipation of significant new federal resources to help more families access
14 affordable, reliable, high-quality childcare, the governor and state agencies are hereby authorized
15 to accept new federal childcare funding and use funds to increase rates and improve payment
16 practices for the childcare assistance program.

17 **40-6.7-4. Childcare and pre-k planning and expansion.**

18 (a) As outlined under the Rhode Island pre-kindergarten act of 2008, chapter 87 of title 16,
19 the department of elementary and secondary education has established a high quality, pre-
20 kindergarten program that meets high-quality standards and builds on the existing early childhood
21 education infrastructure in the state (including childcare, Head Start, and public schools).

22 (b) In anticipation of significant new federal resources to fund high-quality preschool for
23 all children ages three (3) and four (4) years in the state, the governor is hereby authorized to apply
24 for new federal pre-k funding as it becomes available. The department of human services shall
25 work together with the department of elementary and secondary education to develop a plan to
26 strengthen childcare programs statewide in order that they can successfully compete for available
27 pre-k expansion funds and they can successfully deliver high-quality pre-k for three (3) and four
28 (4) year olds within community-based childcare settings that serve children from birth through age
29 five (5) years.

30 (c) This plan shall include:

31 (1) Strategies and resources to maintain and expand access to high-quality childcare and
32 early learning programs for children under age three (3) years statewide, including enhanced
33 childcare assistance program rates for children under age three (3) years, contracts with high-
34 quality infant and toddler childcare programs, partnerships with Early Head Start programs to

1 deliver high-quality infant and toddler care, and wage supplements to recruit and retain skilled
2 infant and toddler educators in childcare programs.

3 (2) Development of staffed family childcare networks and other strategies that help family
4 childcare providers compete for available pre-k expansion funds and successfully deliver high-
5 quality pre-k for three (3) and four (4) year olds.

6 SECTION 2. Section 40-5.2-20 of the General Laws in Chapter 40-5.2 entitled "The Rhode
7 Island Works Program" is hereby repealed.

8 ~~**40-5.2-20. Childcare assistance -- Families or assistance units eligible.**~~

9 ~~(a) The department shall provide appropriate childcare to every participant who is eligible~~
10 ~~for cash assistance and who requires childcare in order to meet the work requirements in accordance~~
11 ~~with this chapter.~~

12 ~~(b) Low income childcare. The department shall provide childcare to all other working~~
13 ~~families with incomes at or below one hundred eighty percent (180%) of the federal poverty level~~
14 ~~if, and to the extent, these other families require childcare in order to work at paid employment as~~
15 ~~defined in the department's rules and regulations. Beginning October 1, 2013, the department shall~~
16 ~~also provide childcare to families with incomes below one hundred eighty percent (180%) of the~~
17 ~~federal poverty level if, and to the extent, these families require childcare to participate on a short-~~
18 ~~term basis, as defined in the department's rules and regulations, in training, apprenticeship,~~
19 ~~internship, on the job training, work experience, work immersion, or other job readiness/job~~
20 ~~attachment program sponsored or funded by the human resource investment council (governor's~~
21 ~~workforce board) or state agencies that are part of the coordinated program system pursuant to §~~
22 ~~42-102-11. Effective from January 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, the department shall also~~
23 ~~provide childcare assistance to families with incomes below one hundred eighty percent (180%) of~~
24 ~~the federal poverty level when such assistance is necessary for a member of these families to enroll~~
25 ~~or maintain enrollment in a Rhode Island public institution of higher education provided that~~
26 ~~eligibility to receive funding is capped when expenditures reach \$200,000 for this provision.~~

27 ~~(c) No family/assistance unit shall be eligible for childcare assistance under this chapter if~~
28 ~~the combined value of its liquid resources exceeds one million dollars (\$1,000,000), which~~
29 ~~corresponds to the amount permitted by the federal government under the state plan and set forth~~
30 ~~in the administrative rulemaking process by the department. Liquid resources are defined as any~~
31 ~~interest(s) in property in the form of cash or other financial instruments or accounts that are readily~~
32 ~~convertible to cash or cash equivalents. These include, but are not limited to: cash, bank, credit~~
33 ~~union, or other financial institution savings, checking, and money market accounts; certificates of~~
34 ~~deposit or other time deposits; stocks; bonds; mutual funds; and other similar financial instruments~~

1 ~~or accounts. These do not include educational savings accounts, plans, or programs; retirement~~
2 ~~accounts, plans, or programs; or accounts held jointly with another adult, not including a spouse.~~
3 ~~The department is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to determine the ownership and~~
4 ~~source of the funds in the joint account.~~

5 ~~(d) As a condition of eligibility for childcare assistance under this chapter, the parent or~~
6 ~~caretaker relative of the family must consent to, and must cooperate with, the department in~~
7 ~~establishing paternity, and in establishing and/or enforcing child support and medical support~~
8 ~~orders for any children in the family receiving appropriate childcare under this section in~~
9 ~~accordance with the applicable sections of title 15, as amended, unless the parent or caretaker~~
10 ~~relative is found to have good cause for refusing to comply with the requirements of this subsection.~~

11 ~~(e) For purposes of this section, "appropriate childcare" means childcare, including infant,~~
12 ~~toddler, preschool, nursery school, and school age, that is provided by a person or organization~~
13 ~~qualified, approved, and authorized to provide the care by the state agency or agencies designated~~
14 ~~to make the determinations in accordance with the provisions set forth herein.~~

15 ~~(f)(1) Families with incomes below one hundred percent (100%) of the applicable federal~~
16 ~~poverty level guidelines shall be provided with free childcare. Families with incomes greater than~~
17 ~~one hundred percent (100%) and less than one hundred eighty percent (180%) of the applicable~~
18 ~~federal poverty guideline shall be required to pay for some portion of the childcare they receive,~~
19 ~~according to a sliding fee scale adopted by the department in the department's rules, not to exceed~~
20 ~~seven percent (7%) of income as defined in subsection (h) of this section.~~

21 ~~(2) Families who are receiving childcare assistance and who become ineligible for~~
22 ~~childcare assistance as a result of their incomes exceeding one hundred eighty percent (180%) of~~
23 ~~the applicable federal poverty guidelines shall continue to be eligible for childcare assistance until~~
24 ~~their incomes exceed two hundred twenty five percent (225%) of the applicable federal poverty~~
25 ~~guidelines. To be eligible, the families must continue to pay for some portion of the childcare they~~
26 ~~receive, as indicated in a sliding fee scale adopted in the department's rules, not to exceed seven~~
27 ~~percent (7%) of income as defined in subsection (h) of this section, and in accordance with all other~~
28 ~~eligibility standards.~~

29 ~~(g) In determining the type of childcare to be provided to a family, the department shall~~
30 ~~take into account the cost of available childcare options; the suitability of the type of care available~~
31 ~~for the child; and the parent's preference as to the type of childcare.~~

32 ~~(h) For purposes of this section, "income" for families receiving cash assistance under §~~
33 ~~40-5.2-11 means gross, earned income and unearned income, subject to the income exclusions in~~
34 ~~§§ 40-5.2-10(g)(2) and 40-5.2-10(g)(3), and income for other families shall mean gross, earned and~~

1 ~~unearned income as determined by departmental regulations.~~

2 ~~(i) The caseload estimating conference established by chapter 17 of title 35 shall forecast~~
3 ~~the expenditures for childcare in accordance with the provisions of § 35-17-1.~~

4 ~~(j) In determining eligibility for childcare assistance for children of members of reserve~~
5 ~~components called to active duty during a time of conflict, the department shall freeze the family~~
6 ~~composition and the family income of the reserve component member as it was in the month prior~~
7 ~~to the month of leaving for active duty. This shall continue until the individual is officially~~
8 ~~discharged from active duty.~~

9 SECTION 3. Section 40-6.2-1.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 40-6.2 entitled "Childcare
10 - State Subsidies" is hereby repealed.

11 **40-6.2-1.1. Rates established.**

12 ~~(a) Through June 30, 2015, subject to the payment limitations in subsection (c), the~~
13 ~~maximum reimbursement rates to be paid by the departments of human services and children, youth~~
14 ~~and families for licensed childcare centers and licensed family childcare providers shall be based~~
15 ~~on the following schedule of the 75th percentile of the 2002 weekly market rates adjusted for the~~
16 ~~average of the 75th percentile of the 2002 and the 2004 weekly market rates:~~

17	LICENSED CHILDCARE CENTERS	75th PERCENTILE OF WEEKLY
18	_____	MARKET RATE
19	INFANT	\$182.00
20	PRESCHOOL	\$150.00
21	SCHOOL AGE	\$135.00
22	LICENSED FAMILY CHILDCARE	75th PERCENTILE OF WEEKLY
23	PROVIDERS	MARKET RATE
24	INFANT	\$150.00
25	PRESCHOOL	\$150.00
26	SCHOOL AGE	\$135.00

27 ~~Effective July 1, 2015, subject to the payment limitations in subsection (c), the maximum~~
28 ~~reimbursement rates to be paid by the departments of human services and children, youth and~~
29 ~~families for licensed childcare centers and licensed family childcare providers shall be based on the~~
30 ~~above schedule of the 75th percentile of the 2002 weekly market rates adjusted for the average of~~
31 ~~the 75th percentile of the 2002 and the 2004 weekly market rates. These rates shall be increased by~~
32 ~~ten dollars (\$10.00) per week for infant/toddler care provided by licensed family childcare~~
33 ~~providers and license exempt providers and then the rates for all providers for all age groups shall~~
34 ~~be increased by three percent (3%). For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, licensed childcare~~

1 ~~centers shall be reimbursed a maximum weekly rate of one hundred ninety three dollars and sixty-~~
2 ~~four cents (\$193.64) for infant/toddler care and one hundred sixty one dollars and seventy one~~
3 ~~cents (\$161.71) for preschool age children.~~

4 ~~(b) Effective July 1, 2018, subject to the payment limitations in subsection (c), the~~
5 ~~maximum infant/toddler and preschool age reimbursement rates to be paid by the departments of~~
6 ~~human services and children, youth and families for licensed childcare centers shall be~~
7 ~~implemented in a tiered manner, reflective of the quality rating the provider has achieved within~~
8 ~~the state's quality rating system outlined in § 42-12-23.1.~~

9 ~~(1) For infant/toddler childcare, tier one shall be reimbursed two and one half percent~~
10 ~~(2.5%) above the FY 2018 weekly amount, tier two shall be reimbursed five percent (5%) above~~
11 ~~the FY 2018 weekly amount, tier three shall be reimbursed thirteen percent (13%) above the FY~~
12 ~~2018 weekly amount, tier four shall be reimbursed twenty percent (20%) above the FY 2018 weekly~~
13 ~~amount, and tier five shall be reimbursed thirty three percent (33%) above the FY 2018 weekly~~
14 ~~amount.~~

15 ~~(2) For preschool reimbursement rates, tier one shall be reimbursed two and one half~~
16 ~~(2.5%) percent above the FY 2018 weekly amount, tier two shall be reimbursed five percent (5%)~~
17 ~~above the FY 2018 weekly amount, tier three shall be reimbursed ten percent (10%) above the FY~~
18 ~~2018 weekly amount, tier four shall be reimbursed thirteen percent (13%) above the FY 2018~~
19 ~~weekly amount, and tier five shall be reimbursed twenty one percent (21%) above the FY 2018~~
20 ~~weekly amount.~~

21 ~~(c) [Deleted by P.L. 2019, ch. 88, art. 13, § 4.]~~

22 ~~(d) By June 30, 2004, and biennially through June 30, 2014, the department of labor and~~
23 ~~training shall conduct an independent survey or certify an independent survey of the then current~~
24 ~~weekly market rates for childcare in Rhode Island and shall forward the weekly market rate survey~~
25 ~~to the department of human services. The next survey shall be conducted by June 30, 2016, and~~
26 ~~triennially thereafter. The departments of human services and labor and training will jointly~~
27 ~~determine the survey criteria including, but not limited to, rate categories and sub-categories.~~

28 ~~(e) In order to expand the accessibility and availability of quality childcare, the department~~
29 ~~of human services is authorized to establish, by regulation, alternative or incentive rates of~~
30 ~~reimbursement for quality enhancements, innovative or specialized childcare, and alternative~~
31 ~~methodologies of childcare delivery, including nontraditional delivery systems and collaborations.~~

32 ~~(f) Effective January 1, 2007, all childcare providers have the option to be paid every two~~
33 ~~(2) weeks and have the option of automatic direct deposit and/or electronic funds transfer of~~
34 ~~reimbursement payments.~~

1 ~~(g) Effective July 1, 2019, the maximum infant/toddler reimbursement rates to be paid by~~
 2 ~~the departments of human services and children, youth and families for licensed family childcare~~
 3 ~~providers shall be implemented in a tiered manner, reflective of the quality rating the provider has~~
 4 ~~achieved within the state's quality rating system outlined in § 42-12-23.1. Tier one shall be~~
 5 ~~reimbursed two percent (2%) above the prevailing base rate for step 1 and step 2 providers, three~~
 6 ~~percent (3%) above prevailing base rate for step 3 providers, and four percent (4%) above the~~
 7 ~~prevailing base rate for step 4 providers; tier two shall be reimbursed five percent (5%) above the~~
 8 ~~prevailing base rate; tier three shall be reimbursed eleven percent (11%) above the prevailing base~~
 9 ~~rate; tier four shall be reimbursed fourteen percent (14%) above the prevailing base rate; and tier~~
 10 ~~five shall be reimbursed twenty three percent (23%) above the prevailing base rate.~~

11 ~~(h) Through December 31, 2021, the maximum reimbursement rates paid by the~~
 12 ~~departments of human services, and children, youth and families to licensed childcare centers shall~~
 13 ~~be consistent with the enhanced emergency rates provided as of June 1, 2021, as follows:~~

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
Infant/Toddler	\$257.54	\$257.54	\$257.54	\$257.54	\$273.00
Preschool Age	\$195.67	\$195.67	\$195.67	\$195.67	\$260.00
School Age	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$245.00

18 ~~The maximum reimbursement rates paid by the departments of human services, and~~
 19 ~~children, youth and families to licensed family childcare providers shall be consistent with the~~
 20 ~~enhanced emergency rates provided as of June 1, 2021, as follows:~~

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
Infant/Toddler	\$224.43	\$224.43	\$224.43	\$224.43	\$224.43
Preschool Age	\$171.45	\$171.45	\$171.45	\$171.45	\$171.45
School Age	\$162.30	\$162.30	\$162.30	\$162.30	\$162.30

25 ~~(i) Effective January 1, 2022, the maximum reimbursement rates to be paid by the~~
 26 ~~departments of human services and children, youth and families for licensed childcare centers shall~~
 27 ~~be implemented in a tiered manner, reflective of the quality rating the provider has achieved within~~
 28 ~~the state's quality rating system outlined in § 42-12-23.1. Maximum weekly rates shall be~~
 29 ~~reimbursed as follows:~~

30 ~~LICENSED CHILDCARE~~

CENTERS	Tier One	Tier Two	Tier Three	Tier Four	Tier Five
Infant/Toddler	\$236.36	\$244.88	\$257.15	\$268.74	\$284.39
Preschool	\$207.51	\$212.27	\$218.45	\$223.50	\$231.39
School Age	\$180.38	\$182.77	\$185.17	\$187.57	\$189.97

1 ~~The maximum reimbursement rates for licensed family childcare providers paid by the~~
2 ~~departments of human services, and children, youth and families is determined through collective~~
3 ~~bargaining. The maximum reimbursement rates for infant/toddler and preschool age children paid~~
4 ~~to licensed family childcare providers by both departments is implemented in a tiered manner that~~
5 ~~reflects the quality rating the provider has achieved in accordance with § 42-12-23.1.~~

6 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES -- RHODE ISLAND CHILDCARE IS ESSENTIAL ACT

1 This act would provide that childcare is part of an early learning program and is an essential
2 program supporting the state's workforce and a strong state economy. The act also would require
3 childcare reimbursement rates to be paid by the departments of human services and children, youth
4 and families for licensed childcare centers to be updated to reflect findings from the 2021 Rhode
5 Island Childcare Market Rate Survey and would be implemented in a tiered manner, reflective of
6 the quality rating the provider has achieved within the state's quality rating system.

7 This act would take effect on July 1, 2022.

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