



October 10, 2018 Public Policy Committee Meeting Summary

Child Care Subsidy

The Public Policy Committee discussed this “year of change,” when Maryland rose from one of the worst states for families struggling to access child care subsidies (as ranked by the National Women’s Law Center, among others) to among the ten best. Advocates were the catalyst. Change will be sustained due to the funding floor now in statute—which will require that subsidy rates permanently rise to at least the 60th percentile of the market and ensure that the level of child care subsidy funding in future fiscal years at least equals the FY18 appropriation of \$100.1 million.

Federal funding from the March 2018 Omnibus spending bill added an additional \$2.37 billion per year to the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), resulting in an influx of \$30 million for Maryland. Then in September of 2018, a “minibus” spending agreement for Federal Fiscal Year 2019 sustained that funding and added an additional \$50 million to CCDBG. It is understood that the federal money should not be thought of as one-time money, and advocates can be gratified that the funding commitment has been sustained over two federal fiscal years.

Maryland’s Child Care Subsidy Branch Chief summarized what she described as a more child-centered approach to subsidy program administration. The Committee reviewed the income eligibility guidelines, subsidy reimbursement rates, and co-payments tables, all of which can be found in the [2018-2019 Public Policy Handbook](#).

Meeting attendees were asked to help get the word out about the new child care subsidy income eligibility levels and to encourage child care provider participation in the Market Rate Survey, now known as the “Cost of Child Care Survey.” Responses to the survey have a big impact on subsidy reimbursement rates.

Anecdotally, the Office of Child Care reports an increase in the number of inquiries and applications for the subsidy program since the announcement of the new income eligibility scales. More data on the rate of program enrollments and expenditures are expected soon.

Child Care Demographics 2018

MFN’s Assistant Deputy Director, Resource & Referral Services walked the Committee through the data included in the 2018 Child Care Demographics report. The report breaks



down statewide information about demand, supply, and cost of child care in Maryland. This report is the only one of its kind in Maryland and informs policy makers, parents, and professionals about the latest data and trends in the field of child care. [The 2018 Maryland Family Network Child Care Demographics](#) includes reports for the entire State, for each of Maryland's 23 counties, and the City of Baltimore.

Other Announcements & Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Public Policy Committee will take place on November 14.

Meeting Materials

Copies of the Child Care Subsidy and Child Care Demographics presentations can be found [here](#).