

Office of Early Childhood (501) 682-8947

Update on SRA Rate and Copayment

We appreciate your partnership and feedback as we implement the recent updates regarding rates and copayments. Your feedback has been invaluable throughout this process, and we recognize that many providers have expressed concerns about the pace of these changes.

Temporary Pause on Rate Adjustments

To support providers as they adapt their business plans, we will be pausing the scheduled rate adjustments until November 1, 2025. During this pause, the department will convene the Early Childhood Commission to provide additional feedback regarding established rates and available funding. This pause is intended to provide you with sufficient time to review and update your operations in preparation for new rates.

The Office of Early Childhood will provide a Quality Enhancement Payment to eligible providers for the month of October. This payment is designed to cover the difference between the previous rates and the newly announced rates, ensuring financial stability for providers as the system changes are implemented. Copayments for families in the SRA system are based on their income and the daily reimbursement rate, therefore we are using the lower announced rates for the copay.

Please note the following important details:

- Quality Enhancement Payments will be issued weekly and separately from regular School Readiness Assistance reimbursements.
- If a provider's private tuition exceeds the designated former quality-based rate, the provider may also charge an additional provider copayment. This provider copayment must not exceed 15% above the designated former quality-based rate, as outlined in the current participant agreement.

Implementation of Family Copayments

Copayments for families will continue as previously communicated and begin to be applied starting October 1, 2025. The SRA portal is currently undergoing updates to ensure that copayments are accurately calculated based on the new rates.

Copayments refer to the amount that the parent is responsible for paying to the provider for childcare services. Providers should follow their existing policy for payment as they would with any other paying parent. To support families, we provided a <u>calculator tool</u> and <u>instructional video</u> to help them estimate their monthly costs. Families will need to understand your site's rates to use this calculator and may be reaching out to you for help.

SRA Portal

The SRA portal will close to providers today, Wednesday, October 1, at 11:59 PM and will remain closed until 4:00 PM on Friday, October 3, to allow for the transition to the updated rates and copayments.

We encourage all providers to submit any remaining September billing by 11:59 PM on Wednesday, October 1, to ensure payment is processed by Friday, October 3. For services beginning October 1, providers may submit billing requests once the system reopens at 4:00 PM on Friday, October 3.

Please review other important dates and information in <u>this letter</u> to ensure smooth billing and payment processing. We appreciate your attention to these dates.